What's in Step 2

- Segmenting the audience
- Determining what information is needed
- Gathering audience profile information
- Analyzing and understanding the audience

Step 2: Identify and analyze the target audience

Once you've identified your goals and objectives, you need to identify the audiences you'll target to achieve your objectives. The target audience is the group of people you want to reach with your message. In some cases it might be obvious, but in others you'll be able to identify it only after conducting research. For example, if you're trying to decrease lawn fertilizer applications, do-it-yourself residents and lawn care companies might be target audiences. If you want to increase streamside vegetated buffers, property owners along the stream corridor might be one of the target audiences. If you want to discourage people from purchasing toxic household products, your target audience might be stay-at-home parents who do most of the household shopping. Raising general awareness of the value and function of a water resource, however, will necessitate a very broad target audience. And remember, although raising the general awareness of the audience is an important first step, it should not be the final goal of your effort.

In reality, there is rarely just one audience. The messages you develop need to be tailored to the different segments of the community that you wish to reach. For example, a campaign to reduce shoreline erosion caused by heavy boat wake at a lake should be targeted at two different audiences—homeowners with shoreline property and docks as well as summer and weekend lake visitors. Each audience uses the lake differently and might place a different value on its resources. Both, however, will benefit from the collective reduction in boat wake action along shorelines.

In all cases, break down the target audience into the smallest segments possible that still retain the characteristics of the audience so that when you reach the audience with your message, they'll help you achieve your objective. If the audience is too broad, chances are you won't be able to develop a message that engages and resonates with the entire target audience.

Think of the audience as your customer. You're selling a message. You want the audience to "buy" behaviors and attitudes that will achieve your goal. For the audience to want to buy those behaviors and attitudes, you need to persuade them that the behaviors will satisfy their needs. Although your "customers" should be informed of the link between their actions and water pollution, you should also be aware that most people are primarily interested in saving time, saving money, or gaining social prestige—more so than protecting the environment. Ask yourself, "What's in it for them?" Finding out what's important to the audience will help you craft the message that will resonate with them most effectively.

Be sure to read Step 2 fully before you begin to identify and segment the audience. The section "Analyzing and understanding the audience" (page 23) will help prepare you for researching your audience.

Segmenting the audience

Target audiences can be grouped in several different ways depending on your objectives. Four common groupings follow. (Keep in mind that segmentation using these groups is a starting point only. You will have to define the audience further in Step 2.)

Geographic location

Audiences are segmented based on specific geographic areas in the watershed such as school districts, county boundaries, residences along a specific stream corridor, or ZIP codes.

Demographics

Audiences are segmented based on demographic characteristics, such as ethnicity, gender, age, income, recreational activities, organizational affiliations, or ownership of specific types of property (e.g., forestland, undeveloped waterfront).

Occupation

Audiences are segmented based on the primary occupations of the target audience in the watershed, such as owners of lawn care companies, developers, county commissioners, automobile service station managers, loggers, or livestock producers.

Behavior patterns

Audiences are segmented based on current practices, e.g., residents who don't recycle, homeowners who dispose of leaves and grass clippings on stream banks, or farmers who plow and plant riparian corridors.

The target audience definition can consider more than one of the above groupings. For example, if you want to generate awareness among students about the degradation of Lake Townsend, you might want to target the audience based on demographics and geography (e.g., schoolchildren ages 12 to 17 within the Lake Townsend watershed).

Deciding which segment to target

One of the keys to knowing which segment of the target audience you need to focus on is understanding the concept of social diffusion. This means that when a new idea or behavior is adopted by 15 to 20 percent of an audience, it has the critical mass to spread on its own. Dr. Everett M. Rogers developed this theory after more than 30 years of research. In his book *Diffusion of Innovations*, Dr. Rogers discusses five categories of people within an audience that generally adopt new behaviors

Kids Organized to Protect Our Environment (KOPE) in Utah targeted its outreach efforts on the trustees of the Sugarhouse Community Council to persuade local decision-makers to pass an open space ordinance. KOPE wanted to protect a local stream from being turned into a shopping center parking lot.

Check out the Getting In Step video.

in sequential stages and at a fairly predictable rate: (1) innovators, (2) early adopters, (3) early majority, (4) late majority, and (5) laggards. Identifying which category members of the audience might fall into will help you understand how to motivate them. The people in these categories adopt new behaviors at different rates and require different amounts and types of encouragement.

- ***Innovators*** *are often seen as venturesome. They frequently have high education levels, high social status, and upward social mobility. They are usually better able than others to cope with uncertainty and high risk.*

- ***Early adopters*** *are second only to innovators in the speed with which they adopt a new behavior. Others often view them as decisive and influential.*

- *The* ***early majority*** *is the segment of the audience that is more deliberate than the innovators or early adopters when making decisions. People in this category tend to be cautious and seek a lot of information on an issue before they make a decision.*

Neighborly outreach

The Empowerment Institute, a nonprofit environmental education organization (**www.globalactionplan.org**), has developed a Sustainable Lifestyle Campaign that many communities across the country have used to get citizens to change their behaviors. Citizen participation is achieved by identifying the most motivated persons in a neighborhood to start the ball rolling. This "innovator" then convenes a Household EcoTeam (five or six neighborhood households) several times over a 4-month period. The meetings are held at a neighbor's home and are led by the "early adopter" neighbors themselves. The Empowerment Institute peaks citizens' interest in getting to know their neighbors better and, most important, finding out how they can save money. The EcoTeam members help each other to reduce waste, use less water, reduce water pollution, and engage in other practical, sustainable behaviors.

The program teaches participants how to reach out to their neighbors, host informational meetings in their homes, and start neighborhood teams. Each team member agrees to recruit two other neighborhood households into the EcoTeam. Behavior changes are documented through baseline and follow-up questionnaires.

According to the Empowerment Institute, on average, participants in the Household EcoTeam Program achieve the following yearly resource savings (depending on the community):

- 41–51 percent less garbage sent into the waste stream
- 25–34 percent less water used
- 9–17 percent less energy used
- 16–20 percent less fuel used for transportation
- $227–$389 saved through more efficient use of resources

- *The **late majority** is the largest of the five categories. These people are conservative, often set in their ways, and skeptical about trying new things and adopting new behaviors.*

- ***Laggards** are the most resistant to change. They are the least likely to adopt a new behavior no matter how hard you try to educate and motivate them.*

Picking the low-hanging fruit

Many outreach campaigns fail because organizers believe they need to focus heavily on targeting the late majority and laggards segments since they encompass the greatest number of people. However, the late majority and laggards are the hardest people to reach and the hardest to convince that they should change their behavior. It is much easier to reach and convince innovators or early adopters.

Once you've reached the members of these categories, they can become partners to start the diffusion process in their own circles. Because they are considered to be leaders and are well respected, their peers will be more likely to pick up the new behavior. When it comes to changing behavior, success means "preaching to the choir." Focus your efforts on those most likely to adopt the new behavior and then let them spread the message or behavior in their own spheres of influence.

Once you've identified the target audience, you'll need to gather information on them before proceeding to the next step. Conducting at least a rudimentary analysis of the target audience is a task that's often ignored, but such an oversight can render the rest of the outreach plan useless. To develop an effective message that resonates with the audience, find out what they think about the issues and what messages might engage and motivate them.

What information do I need about the target audience?

First, remember that the target audience is your customer. You want to sell your customer a product (e.g., environmental awareness, membership in an organization, participation in a stream restoration project, or some voluntary behavior change). So you need to find out what will make the customer buy the product. Keep in mind that you cannot assume that the customer's reasons or values will be the same as yours. Several types of information are needed to characterize and assess the customer.

Demographics

Collecting demographic information will help define the socioeconomic structure of the target audience, the appropriate education and age levels for proposed messages, and the types of organizations that could be engaged to implement outreach activities. For example, retired persons, with more free time, are able to volunteer more often.

Basic information needed about the target audience

- What are the demographics of the audience?
- What is the knowledge base of the audience regarding watershed issues?
- How does the audience receive information?
- How do members of the audience communicate among themselves?
- Does the audience think there is a problem?
- If so, who do they think is responsible?
- How does the audience perceive your organization?

Reaching Amish farmers

In Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the Natural Resources Conservation Service learned that to convince Amish dairymen to keep the cows out of the stream to reduce pollution, traditional outreach methods using television, radio, or phone calls were not options. Instead, they turned to one-on-one chats with the farmers themselves.

"The Amish were going to be our focus since they own most of the land and are all dairymen. The problem with working with the Amish is that they don't have phones. If you want to see an Amish man, you've got to jump in your car and drive out and look for him."

—Frank Lucas, Pequea-Mill Creek Project Leader, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Check out the Getting In Step video.

Religious groups promote the environment

In Louisiana environmental leaders used religious commonalities to help reach environmental goals. Religious congregations throughout the coastal area joined to sponsor a series of public forums to engage local citizens in efforts to protect and conserve Louisiana's coastal wetlands. The forums were held in local churches and synagogues, which provided a neutral atmosphere that fostered cooperation among the attendees.

Knowledge of the issue

Determining baseline knowledge of watershed issues among members of the target audience will establish where you need to begin to define your issue. For example, does the target audience know what a watershed is or understand what causes polluted runoff? If not, you have to define those terms before you use them in your messages.

Attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions

Exploring what people in the target audience think about an issue or problem and what they value and believe will help you link watershed issues with the audience's concerns. If they don't believe a problem exists or don't understand how it affects environmental resources they value, you'll need to educate them before expecting them to take action.

Remember: Perception is reality. How is your organization perceived by the target audience? If not favorably, you might want to have someone else deliver your message.

Communication channels

Finding out how the target audience gets its information will help you to develop, format, and distribute your message. What newspapers, magazines, or newsletters do they read? To what organizations do they belong? Do they receive information in other forms such as community radio programs? Do they watch local news or cable television? Do they even have televisions? Understanding what communication channels the target audience uses and trusts will help lend credibility to your message. It is important to use communication channels that the target audience perceives to be unbiased.

Social data

Collecting information on the types of relationships and cultural beliefs and norms present in your community can help you identify the barriers to changing behavior, better ways of communicating your message, and the formats that might be most appropriate to deliver your message. Social data will also give you insight on who talks to whom, who makes decisions, and who follows others. Understanding community culture and its wide range of distinct and shared values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs can help you understand what people care about and why, as well as what motivates them to take action. Knowledge about racial, religious, and cultural heritage in your community can help you understand why people behave in certain ways, hold certain beliefs, or communicate in certain ways. By collecting social data, you can gain a better understanding of how a community's values and beliefs relate to environmental issues. In addition, social data, such as what social or religious groups have strong memberships among the target audience, might help you identify additional ways to distribute your message. These groups are often well respected within a community, and because they already have the ear of your audience, it will be easier to communicate through them.

How do I get information on the target audience?

Now that you know what kinds of information you need from the target audience, how do you get it? You can use several different tools depending on the makeup of the target audience and your available resources (time and money). Any information you collect will make your campaign stronger, so don't worry if you don't have access to a Census Bureau database or can't make your survey results statistically significant. Research other campaigns targeted at the audience by other organizations or municipalities and learn how they collected information. Find out whether any of the information they collected might help your cause and save you from reinventing the wheel. A good place to start would be at the U.S. Census Bureau Web site (http://factfinder.census.gov) or at RoperASW (www.roperasw.com), a commercial site focused on consumer attitudes, shopping styles, and media habits.

If you don't have ready access to the information you need on the audience, the following tools will help.

Demographic databases

All sorts of databases that contain information on the demographic makeup of potential target audiences are available. Census data are collected every 10 years and were last collected in 2000. These data are available through the Internet from the U.S. Census Bureau at www.census.gov and from local libraries. If you don't have access to these files or don't have the resources needed to extract the information, consider asking a college marketing class for assistance. They could be looking for real-world projects, and they might be willing to conduct a detailed analysis of the target group at no charge.

Pros/Cons. Databases can provide consolidated demographic data and can sort the data by different parameters. However, the data might not be current, and you might not have the staff or equipment to manipulate the data. In addition, although the data might provide information on ethnic populations and distribution, those data will not help you understand the cultures in the audience. For more information on collecting cultural information, see the section "Community cultural assessment and characterization" on page 20.

Public agencies

Local public agencies, such as planning departments and property valuation agencies, can be valuable sources of information on the makeup of the target audience. Be sure to contact them early in the data-gathering process. Information collected in this manner should be held in confidence: circulating perceptions and other information provided in private can seriously harm your credibility and effectiveness.

Pros/Cons. Public agencies might have access to large populations and have information on the target audiences collected over a long period of time. The agencies might not, however, have this information in a readily available format. Agency personnel might not be forthcoming

Tools to gather audience profile information

- Databases
- Public agencies
- Trade associations
- Surveys
  - *Mail*
  - *Phone*
  - *E-mail/Web*
  - *Personal*
- Focus groups
- Community discussions
- Observation
- Community cultural assessment and characterization

with personal information on the composition, perceptions, or values of the target group.

Trade associations

Trade associations keep track of marketing research and other information on their members. If the target audience is associated with a trade group, contact the organization to see what's available. For example, if you want to collect information on auto repair shops that recycle used motor oil, an automobile parts trade association might provide you with names, addresses, and association meeting schedules. Your local Chamber of Commerce can also provide information on local businesses and the demographic makeup of the community.

Pros/Cons. Trade associations might have information specific to the target audience and could possibly serve as a distribution mechanism for your message. The data might be biased toward their constituency, however, and might not be available for outside use.

Surveys by mail

A mail survey is an excellent way to obtain baseline information about target audiences. It can also be used to conduct a post-project evaluation to measure changes in attitudes or behavior in the target audience. Before conducting a mail survey, make sure you'll be able to obtain current addresses for the portion of the target audience you are surveying. Keep in mind what information you want to collect, how you're going to use that information, and how the data will be tabulated. This planning can save a lot of anguish once the results come back. Make the survey relatively short, and explain up-front how long it will take the respondent to fill it out. State the objective of the survey clearly, make the format easy to read, and include a self-addressed stamped envelope to increase the return rate. If you want your results to be statistically meaningful, consult a marketing professional or college instructor for suggestions on survey design, random sampling techniques, follow-up prompting, and other considerations. You might also want to offer giveaways to survey respondents as incentives to participate.

Pros/Cons. Mail surveys allow participants to think about their answers before they respond, can reach large numbers of people, and can gather data from people who might not be accessible in person. The disadvantages of mail surveys include printing and mailing costs, staff time for tabulating results, and the potential for low response rates. Typical survey response rates range from 40 percent to 20 percent or less. In addition, the people who complete the survey are likely to be those interested in your topic, which can introduce bias in your results.

Surveys by phone

Surveys by phone can also provide good baseline (and post-project) information on the target audience. Again, make sure you have access to current phone numbers for the portion of the target audience you are calling and the resources available (phones and volunteers) to

Don't soil our waters

For years the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has worked to educate the public about soil erosion and its detrimental effects on water quality. However, phone surveys continued to show that the public knew very little about the effects of soil erosion on water quality or how to address them.

Before implementing a statewide educational campaign on the issue, DEP worked with two focus groups to obtain input on citizens' ideas, thoughts, and behaviors regarding soil erosion and water pollution. The focus groups helped DEP decide which communication materials—newspaper ads, radio ads, and direct mailings—to use in a pilot advertising campaign.

Follow-up telephone surveys conducted after a test ad campaign revealed that the newspaper and radio ads were most effective. The direct mailings were not as effective because the cost per response received was greater than that of the other formats. Of those who remembered seeing or hearing the newspaper and radio ads, nearly 70 percent could describe at least one action that they could take to reduce soil erosion. For more information, visit **www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/doceducation/dirt.htm**.

carry out the survey. The success of phone surveys tends to vary geographically: rural audiences can sometimes be more willing than urban audiences to take the time to answer questions. Standardize the greeting used by all of your volunteers, and practice proper phone skills. If a person called does not want to participate, thank the person and move on to the next one. Hold practice sessions to be sure that all surveyors ask the questions the same way. Schedule calls at mixed times—some during weekends, some during the day, but most in the early evening.

Pros/Cons. Phone surveys allow data gathering from people who might not be accessible in person, elicit immediate responses, and can accommodate many participants. In addition, the anonymity might allow people to be more honest. The disadvantages include the need to access correct phone numbers for participants, the lack of time for participants to think about their responses, the level of resources involved, and exclusion of those who will not respond to unsolicited calls or do not have telephones.

Surveys by E-mail/Web

Done correctly, an e-mail or Web survey offers an anonymous way for your target audience to communicate with you and tell you how they really feel about your organization and your programs. E-mail surveys can be sent through your organization's e-mail system so respondents can access the survey and respond using their e-mail programs. If you place surveys on your Web site, respondents visiting the site can respond to the survey through online forms.

How to conduct a survey

Select the sample

Your survey participants should be members of the target audience. Ideally you should choose the number of people you need to survey to yield statistically significant results. You might be constrained, however, by time, staffing, or funding. In 1999 the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) conducted a survey of Chesapeake Bay residents' behaviors and attitudes regarding three practices that contribute to nutrient pollution—lawn fertilization, septic system maintenance, and picking up after pets. Telephone interviews were conducted among a random sample of 733 residents in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. For your survey, a small, representative sample could reflect the larger group, but the larger the sample, the more precise your survey results will be. Keep in mind, however, that the rate of improvement in precision decreases as your sample size increases. For example, increasing a sample from 250 to 1,000 only doubles the precision; it does not quadruple it.

Design the questionnaire

Keep your survey short and simple. Long questionnaires get less response than short questionnaires as a general rule, so try to stay well under 5 pages or 20 minutes by telephone. The CWP's survey contained 35 questions and was limited to 5 to 7 minutes to increase the likelihood of participation. (The final report and survey instrument are available online at **www.cwp.org/UNEP_all.PDF**.) Also consider how you will handle and analyze the responses. Will you use a computer program while conducting the survey or will you enter the data later? Making these decisions early on will make tabulating the results quicker and easier.

Subjects are also more likely to respond to a survey based on question content, particularly if they are involved and interested in the issue. Include an introduction or welcome message at the top to give your respondents as much information as possible. Questions can be multiple choice, ratings or agreement scales (such as the Likert Scale, which measures attitudes), or open-ended fill-in-the-blanks. The visual format also makes a difference. Maintain a logical left-to-right flow for minimal distraction. And try to keep your answer spaces in a straight line, horizontally or vertically. Be sure to leave a space at the end for "Other Comments."

Conduct the survey

You've identified the issues, selected your sample, and designed the questionnaire. Now it's time to conduct the survey. Surveys are traditionally administered by phone, by mail, or in person. In recent years online surveys through e-mail or on the Internet have become popular. These formats are discussed in detail starting on page 13.

Analyze the data

Once all the results are in, the data must be analyzed. For those on a low budget, it may be as simple as tallying the results on paper. For those with a bit more funding, several commercial software packages are available to design and conduct your surveys and provide statistical analysis. Many are available on the Web.

Additional resources

Web Surveyor, **www.websurveyor.com**
StatPac, Designing Surveys and Questionnaires, **www.statpac.com/surveys**
Survey System, Survey Design, **www.surveysystem.com/sdesign.htm**

Tips for reducing bias

It is virtually impossible to conduct a perfectly unbiased survey. But by taking a few precautions, your survey can be closer to being 100 percent accurate and objective. The main sources of bias in a questionnaire are

- **Nonrepresentative sample**

Ensuring a representative sample is the first step to preventing survey bias. For example, daytime-only phone surveys reach stay-at-home parents or non-working people, so results won't represent your target audience as a whole. Web surveys are limited to those with Internet access and are not necessarily representative of the range of residents in your target audience.

- **Non-return bias**

If a large number of people fail to respond to your surveys, bias toward those that did respond is introduced. Be sure to use up-to-date addresses and phone numbers. If your survey is short, concise, and attractive and you promise to make the results of the survey available to each participant, you are more likely to get responses.

- **Leading questions**

Do not ask leading questions that indicate the preferred answer. When you state what you think, the person might feel that you're introducing bias into any subsequent answers. People are reluctant to disagree with the interviewer's "authority." An example of a leading question: "You know that using a lot of fertilizer on your lawn is bad, right?" The participant might not have known that the overuse of fertilizer is not recommended, and this information could cause him or her to answer the rest of your questions based on the assumption that he or she knows the consequences of fertilizer overuse.

- **Question misinterpretation**

When talking to respondents, speak in their language; this draws them out and helps you understand how they truly feel. Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no. You can elicit more information from respondents using open-ended questions, which encourage them to talk and provide salient details. However, phrase questions so that the respondent understands them easily. Long, complicated questions will quickly lose the participants' interest, and they might skip the survey entirely. Keep in mind that answers to open-ended questions take more time to evaluate once the survey is complete, which can increase your costs.

The City of San Diego conducts telephone surveys every year to gauge the community's awareness of stormwater pollution prevention. After asking to speak to the youngest person over the age of 18, the questions turn to the sources of polluted runoff and how the citizen might or might not be contributing to the problem. The questions are concise and easily understood, allowing the respondent plenty of options and opportunity for additional comments. Once the data are collected, an outside market research firm provides a final report with findings and recommendations (available at **www.thinkbluesd.org/literature.htm**). The City is able to change the direction of its outreach program, if needed, based on the survey results.

To send an e-mail survey, you'll need a bank of e-mail addresses for members of your target audience. If you have an organizational listserver, you could use it, but this might bias the survey results because those participants are most likely already aware of and active in your cause. When you do send your survey, the e-mail can be either a plain text message (text-based survey) or an e-mail attachment (form-based survey created through Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect, for example). After recipients fill out the survey, they can send it back simply by replying to your message.

A Web survey will gather responses from citizens that have access to the Internet. Upload the survey on your organization's Web site and put plenty of advertising on the homepage. People visiting your site will have the opportunity to anonymously fill out the survey at their own pace.

Pros/Cons. E-mail surveys take a short amount of time, are self-paced, and provide the sender with fast results. Computer issues can cause problems, however, if a server goes down or if the user has problems downloading attachments. Web surveys assume that members of your target audience visit your Web site regularly. Keep in mind, however, that most visitors to your site might also be aware of the issues and your efforts. In addition, visitors to your site might not be in your target audience and could skew the survey results.

For more information on conducting surveys, see the boxes on pages 14 and 15.

Farmers' views on TMDL development and implementation

In response to a presentation at a local Farm Bureau to introduce water quality issues and TMDLs, the Yolo County, California, Resource Conservation District convened a focus group composed of area farmers. Their concerns, listed below, provide valuable context for outreach and education projects targeting agricultural activities and practices:

- We don't have time to come to meetings.
- We don't want a bunch of outsiders that know nothing about farming to tell us how to farm.
- We want to be the only decision-makers on these projects.
- There are issues of private property rights.
- How are we going to afford to make the changes in practices?
- We don't want to do something now and then have an agency come to us in a few years and tell us what we did was wrong and then have to change it.
- We don't feel there is enough scientific data in place to tell us what we should be doing.

—Katy Pye, Yolo Resource Conservation District, California

Personal surveys

Surveys conducted in person (interviews) allow the interviewer to ask questions or administer the survey in a variety of ways (e.g., on the street, by appointment, in people's homes). However, they can also be time-consuming and labor-intensive. Potential interviewees must first be contacted to see if they're interested in participating. Then the survey must be conducted around the interviewee's schedule and availability. Interviews should be conducted at locations that are convenient and familiar to the participant, such as a local library or park or in the participant's home. If the participant is in a comfortable, familiar environment, you're more likely to get honest, in-depth answers. Interviews are effective for establishing rapport between the interviewer and the participant, which is especially important if the subject matter is sensitive.

Pros/Cons. Personal interviews allow the interviewer to record the participant's body language and tone during the interview, helping to gain a better understanding of the answers. However, personal interviews remove the anonymity that might have resulted in more honest answers in a phone or mail survey. In addition, having to arrange the interview around the participant's schedule and availability could draw out your collection effort for several months. Finally, the skills of the interviewer can make or break the interview.

Focus groups

Focus groups provide an opportunity to meet with several members of the target audience at once and allow them the chance to expand on comments and ideas. The focus group participants may be selected through surveys, recommended by a member of the target audience, or selected at random. Focus groups can also be formed based on demographics such as age group, place of residence, or occupation. Try not to accept volunteers because they are likely to already have an interest in the message. If possible, pay the focus group participants a small amount ($10 to $50) as an incentive to participate and to thank them. If you don't have the funds to pay them, at least provide food or other incentives.

Typically, up to 12 members of the target audience are asked to participate for 1 or 2 hours. Be sure to schedule the focus group at a time and place convenient for the participants. For example, many people have jobs during the day and are available to meet only after 5:00 p.m.

The focus group should be handled by an outside moderator to avoid introducing bias into the results. A series of questions are asked to the group, and the answers are recorded on flip charts or video/audio tape. Be sure to ask open-ended questions that result in detailed answers to collect as much information about the audience as possible. Remember that this is an opportunity to collect information, not to explain the issues to the group. Focus groups also enable you to start building a network of people you might be able to tap into later to help deliver your message.

Focus group checklist

1. Identify target audience. (4 months prior to selected focus group date)
2. Define goal of focus group. (2 months prior)
3. Determine payment amount and method. (2 months prior)
4. Compile mailing list for invitees. (6 weeks prior)
5. Identify moderator. (5 weeks prior)
6. Develop questions. (4 weeks prior)
7. Arrange and reserve session site. (4 weeks prior)
8. Write and send invitations. (4 weeks prior)
9. Follow up invitations with phone calls. (2 weeks prior)
10. Determine room arrangements (seating, audio/visual aids such as flip charts). (2 weeks prior)
11. Place reminder call to participants. (2 days prior)
12. Make arrangements for food or beverages. (2 days prior)
13. Conduct the focus group.
14. Distribute payments. (immediately after focus group)
15. Send thank-you letter to participants. (2 days after)
16. Review tapes or notes from focus group and summarize. (2 days after)
17. Analyze focus group summary and write report. (1 week after)

The value of building rapport in focus groups cannot be overstated. Telling the participants about the reason for the focus group, how the room is set up, and why there are microphones or observers makes the participants feel smart and valuable. Giving them ground rules such as "speak one at a time" and "avoid side conversations" or "respect the opinions of others" means that the moderator saves time by not having to play traffic cop later. Giving participants a reason for the discussion, e.g., "We're going to talk about connections between human activities and environmental problems," gives them an idea of what to expect, helps them access memory, and keeps the answers flowing freely.

Ask participants to introduce themselves using name, age, occupation, and where they live, and ask each participant a question related to the purpose of the focus group to allow the participant to feel more comfortable speaking in front of strangers and to see where he or she fits in the group. This process also allows the focus group moderator to create rapport with each participant through eye contact that demonstrates the moderator's willingness to listen and openness to new ideas.

Strongly consider recording your focus group on audio or videotape to pick up on tone of voice or body language. Sometimes these auditory and visual clues can help you better interpret how the focus group participants feel about certain issues. Remember: Body language is 60 percent of communication. And if you plan to record the session, be sure to let the participants know in advance. If someone doesn't want to be "on the record," find another participant.

Choose a setting that is appropriate and makes the participants feel comfortable. What message does the setting send? Is it corporate, cozy, informal, or sterile? Does the setting encourage conversation? (For example, are the chairs arranged in a circle or are they facing one direction? Do what you can to the room layout to foster communication, such as rearranging the chairs.)

Pros/Cons. Focus groups can provide insights about the target audience's composition, perceptions, and beliefs; provide interaction among participants; and build support for further actions or outreach communication. They can give community members a sense of inclusion in the community process by providing them with a forum to express their opinions. The disadvantages are that focus groups can accommodate only a few participants, the time demand on participants is considerable, and their success depends largely on the skills of the moderators. In addition, focus groups might not be suitable for certain cultures where peer pressure or deference to others could inhibit discussion.

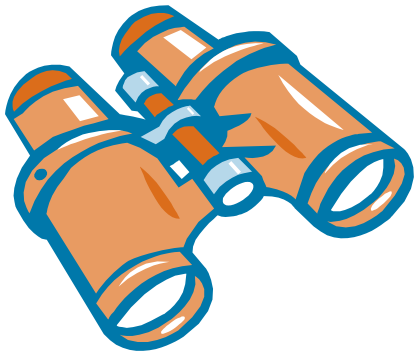
Community/neighborhood discussions

Community discussions are somewhat similar to focus groups, but they involve more people, are more open-ended, and can be less

focused. Speaking directly with the target audience is a great way to get information straight from the source. A community discussion might involve citizens that have volunteered for the discussion or are in attendance because of a prior commitment. For example, many homeowners' associations and local communities hold public meetings quarterly and are willing to spare some time to discuss important community issues. If your group has the funds and resources, you might choose to rent space in a nearby hotel or community center and advertise a meeting devoted to your organization's needs.

Schedule discussions on weekday evenings and weekends to attract working and nonworking residents. Try to get as much information as you can in as short a time period as possible because your attendees are likely to have busy schedules. Be sure to develop an agenda, stick to it, and have someone serve as a timekeeper to keep things on track. Allow a short amount of time after the meeting for individual questions and concerns. You may also want to bring surveys and questionnaires with you for residents to fill out and drop off or send back.

Pros/Cons. A community or neighborhood discussion will help your organization gather information directly from affected residents. You won't have to wait for results because you'll get immediate responses from attendees. On the other hand, these types of meetings typically attract people already interested in the subject. You might not reach any citizens who don't know about your issue. Piggybacking on existing meetings will help you avoid this bias because the meeting attendees will have come to talk about other things.



Observation

Observing how the target audience behaves can help you gain insight on people in your target segment and ways that you might encourage behavior change. This method helps you get a picture of what people actually do, as opposed to what they say they do. When asked, most people say that they care about water quality and believe that protecting it is important. When observed, however, those same people might be found dumping motor oil down storm drains or not picking up after their pets. Observations can be made during or after the behavior is completed. During the behavior, the observer makes notes about what triggered the behavior, how much effort the person exerted for the behavior, and what behaviors (facial expression, body language, etc.) accompanied the target behavior.

Pros/Cons. Observing what people do instead of listening to what they say they do is a good way to get a clear picture of how people behave. However, observing how they behave in certain situations can be viewed as an invasion of privacy. Be sure that all observations are carried out in public locations. If the people you're watching notice you, explain what you are doing and why. Often you might have to observe people for hours before you see them engage in the target behavior, if at all; thus the time commitment for this method is unpredictable.

For more detailed information on community cultural assessment, obtain a copy of EPA's *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place* (EPA 842-B-01-003) from the National Service Center for Environmental Publications at 1-800-490-9198 or e-mail ncepiwo@one.net. It's also available in PDF format on the Web at **www.epa.gov/ecocommunity/pdf/ccecomplete.pdf**.

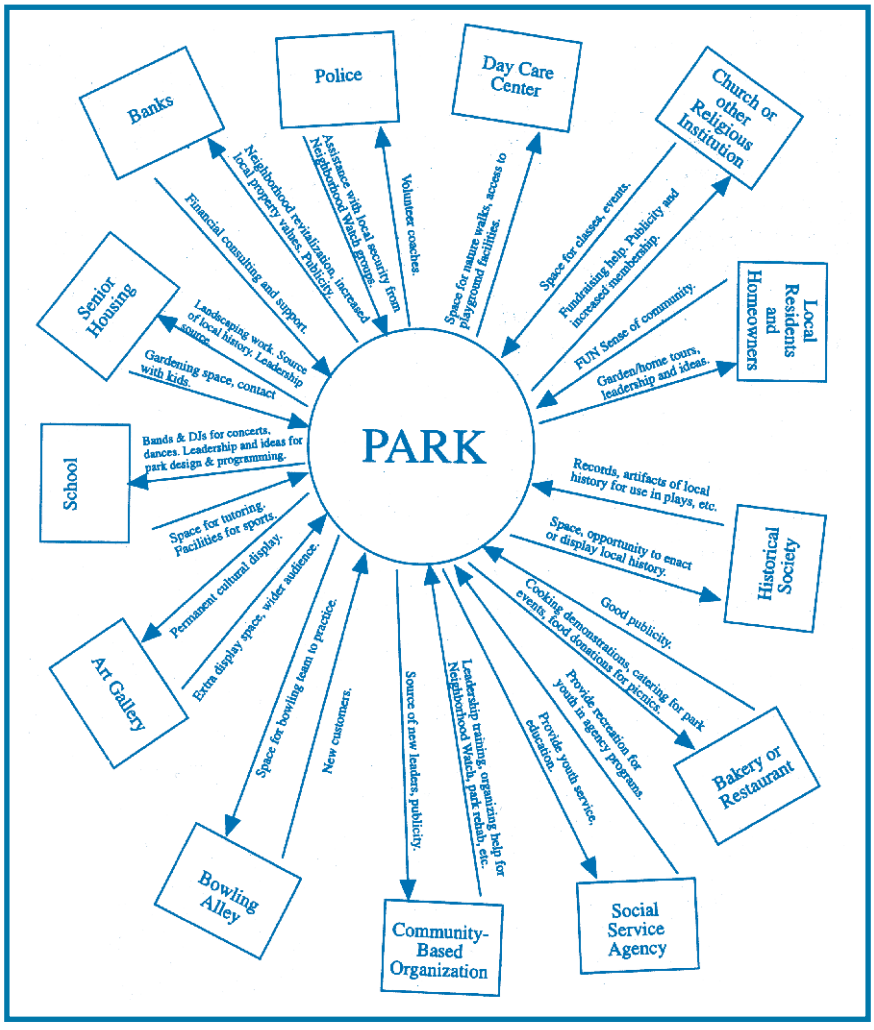
Community cultural assessment and characterization

Understanding the social and cultural aspects of a community can be very important when there's no baseline information on the target audience. For example, if you've just moved from San Francisco to accept a job as a watershed coordinator in a small town in West Virginia, you might not fully understand what makes the citizens in your new hometown tick. The things that San Franciscans care about and what motivates them to act might be quite different from what you'll find in West Virginia.

Cultural assessment and community characterization are also useful if previous efforts at reaching and motivating the audience have failed. A cultural assessment doesn't just describe the community's makeup. It goes a step further by analyzing the cultural and ethnic preferences, beliefs, and attitudes present in the community. You can carry out cultural assessments by collecting and analyzing cultural information on your community obtained through state and local social service agencies; education agencies; the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and annual reports prepared by cities, counties, and states. Cultural demographic information can also be researched through all of the methods already discussed in this section (e.g., focus groups, community meetings). Once you know and understand the types of cultures present in your community, you'll be better able to craft messages that resonate with members of each culture, select appropriate formats, and determine the best distribution methods.

Collecting information to characterize the community might help you understand why past outreach efforts might have failed and what can be changed to achieve your objectives. In addition, if your goal is very broad, such as raising general watershed awareness, characterizing your community members might help you to better focus your objectives based on who talks to whom in the community, how information flows through its members, and how individuals view their community and watershed issues. Characterizing the community will help you answer key questions about the community's values, attitudes, and beliefs and how they relate to your organization's goals and objectives.

Asset Map



Source: *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place*, U.S. EPA, 2003.

Pros/Cons. Although understanding the cultures present in the target audience is important to developing and distributing your message, cultural misunderstandings could result during the collection and analysis of such information. For instance, the audience members might feel they are being selected or "picked on" because of their cultural or ethnic preferences and beliefs. Information collected during a cultural assessment should be kept highly confidential and used carefully and only when appropriate.

Social maps

Many of the methods listed previously can help you characterize the community and analyze community processes. An additional method of collecting this information is called social mapping. Social maps are drawings used to collect, organize, and analyze social data about a community obtained from actual community members or collected through surveys, focus groups, and community meetings. They illustrate issues or problems, causes and effects, and relationships of organizations and individuals. Social maps can be used to present information on physical layout of a community or watershed, perceptions, demographics, communication patterns, and more. Maps can be drawn during focus groups, community meetings, or other gatherings of target audience members. There are four types of social maps—asset, cognitive, concept, and social network. Each type of map is explained further in the following sections.

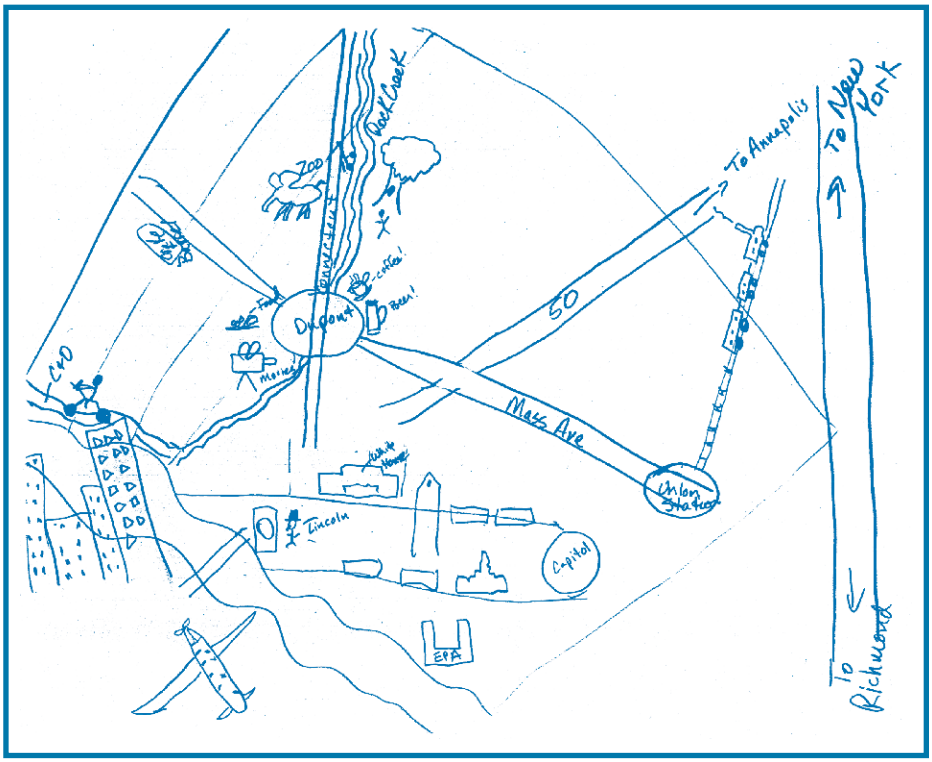
Asset maps

An asset map can be used to describe the assets that individuals, groups and organizations, or institutions can offer to solve water quality problems. It can help you gain access to other resources and services you might not have been aware of to help distribute your message, obtain funding, or collect data.

Cognitive maps

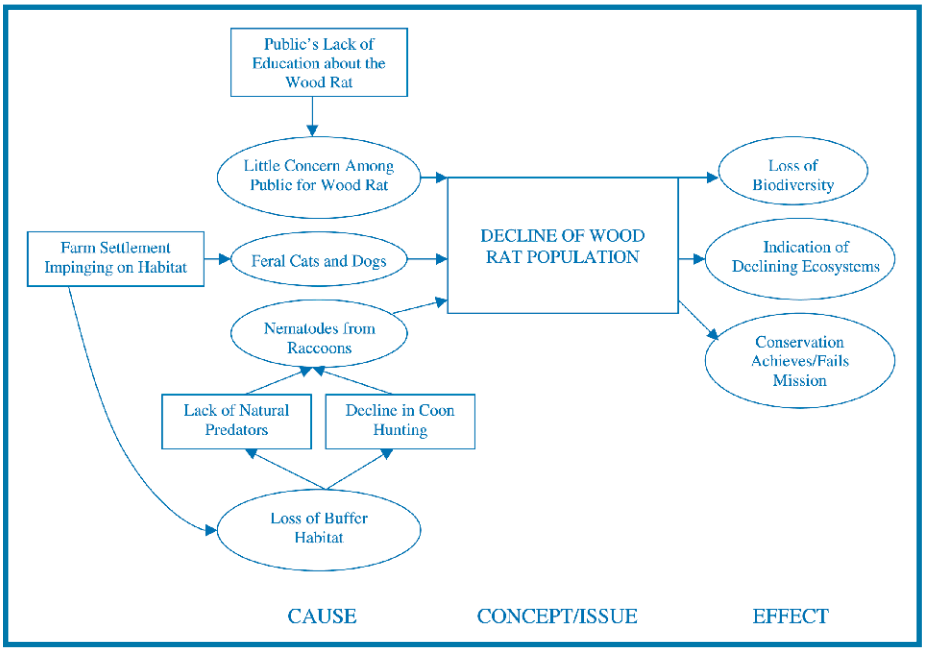
Cognitive maps help individuals and groups visualize how they perceive their community and surroundings through self-made drawings. Based on the maps, you can learn what different people see as the community's center, which elements of their community are most important to them (e.g., parks, churches, schools), and their perception of the community's environmental characteristics. You might also learn where members of the target audience spend their time, which will aid in the distribution of your message.

Cognitive Map



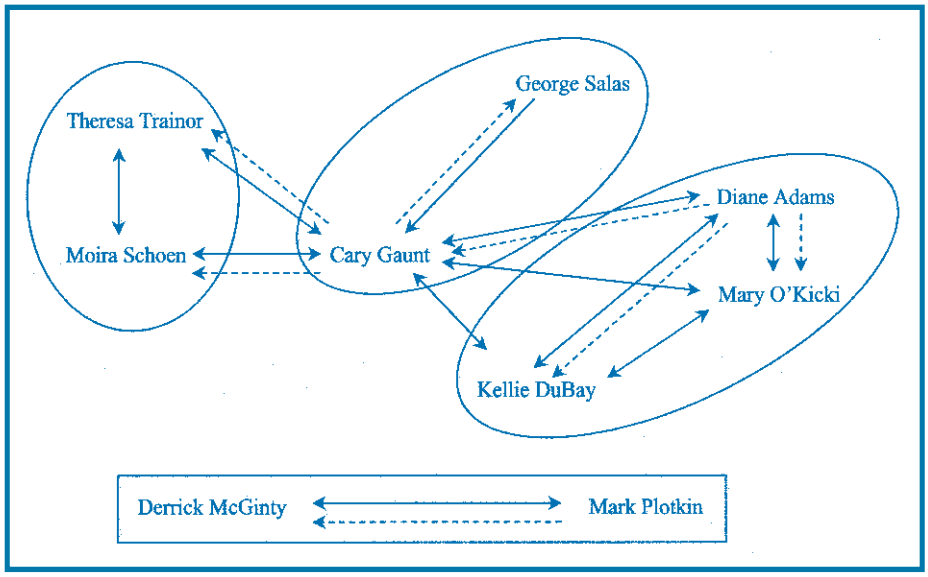
Source: *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place*, U.S. EPA, 2003.

Concept Map



Source: *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place*, U.S. EPA, 2003.

Social Network Map



Source: *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place*, U.S. EPA, 2003.

Concept maps

A concept map identifies the relationships between causes and effects of environmental problems, such as the link between land use decisions and nonpoint source pollution. Your organization might ask community members to draw a concept map depicting their thoughts on how nonpoint source pollution occurs in their community. Once the map is finished, you can see what stereotypes might be present in your community, what perceptions create barriers to change, and where you might need to focus your campaign's attention.

Social network maps

A social network map will help you learn how information is disseminated throughout the target audience. It describes patterns of communication, relationships, and information flow. Participants depict their own personal social networks and then compare them with those of the rest of the group. You can tailor your distribution methods to fit with how members of the target audience currently communicate. Using social network maps will show you to whom people go for advice in the community (opinion leaders), who is the most "connected" in the community (information disseminators), which individuals or groups bridge gaps between different social groups (gatekeepers), and which individuals or groups are isolated from the rest of the community and thus might require more education and awareness before they can be expected to take action. Some groups could be isolated by language barriers, customs, or beliefs. Social network mapping may be especially valuable for small communities or rural areas because those populations are often less segmented.

Pros/Cons. The largest obstacle to conducting mapping exercises is the need for group participation. Mapping is not very effective unless

several members of the target audience help create the maps. Asset mapping is particularly useful for large groups of people, where visual and easy-to-understand graphics enhance communication and the expression of community values. Cognitive mapping allows you to see the community through the eyes of members of the target audience. In addition, participants get the chance to analyze the data, which might provide unique insights that only members of the target audience could provide. One of the disadvantages of cognitive mapping is the tendency of people to spend too much time on the artistic quality of the map instead of its content. A concept map is a great way to show the relationship between both the perceived and real-life causes of problems and the associated effects on the environment. Social network mapping might be useful in large communities where information flow among members of a diverse target audience might be poorly understood by project leaders.

Analyzing and understanding the audience

Now that you've identified the target audience and collected some information about them, you need to analyze and understand them. What drives them to engage in the behaviors you'd like to change? What are the barriers to modifying their management practices or behaviors? Learning the answers to these questions will help you understand how your audience thinks and how you can tailor your message to motivate changes in behavior.

Barriers to action: Why do they do what they do?

There are many reasons why people do not choose sustainable behaviors. They might simply be unaware of the impact their behavior has on water quality. They might believe that doing the right thing is too expensive, takes too much time, is inconvenient, or is socially unacceptable. And unfortunately, when it comes to the environment, most people simply do not believe that a change in the personal routines and habitats of just one person will make a difference. These reasons are called barriers. Barriers prevent people from taking positive steps toward improving the environment. Barriers can be physical (such as the lack of facilities to collect household hazardous waste), economic (high cost), psychological (a perception that lush lawns are prized), or knowledge-based (lack of understanding of how to conduct a soil test). These obstacles must be minimized or removed so that the benefit outweighs the cost or effort of the action.

To address these barriers, you need to think about what motivates people not to engage in environmentally friendly behavior. For example, many people do not pick up after their pets. Most think that pet waste is a part of nature and that it biodegrades quickly. Many even view it as fertilizer. They don't realize that dog droppings are one of the leading causes of pathogen contamination in streams; each gram

Mapping resources

Decision Explorer: Getting Started with Cognitive Mapping by Fran Ackermann, Colin Eden, and Steve Cropper
www.banxia.com/depaper.html

Mental Maps by Peter Gould and Rodney White
Available from Routledge Publishers
www.routledge.com

Understanding barriers

Audience research conducted by Toronto's Public Health Office uncovered many barriers to widespread implementation of integrated pest management (IPM) practices by landlords, building managers, and residents, including the following:

- Limited knowledge of IPM
- Lack of trust in IPM's effectiveness
- A misunderstanding that IPM costs more than traditional spray methods
- An expectation of immediate elimination of pests
- The stigma associated with cockroaches, making information-sharing difficult
- Poor understanding of factors that contribute to pest infestations
- Lack of awareness about health risks associated with pesticide sprays

Armed with this information, health officials developed a comprehensive education campaign that ultimately led to a reduction in the amount of pesticides used by the target audience.

For other cases studies like this one, visit **www.toolsofchange.com**, a Canadian community-based social marketing Web site that includes more than 70 case studies on community programs across North America.

of dog poop has more than 20 million *E. coli* bacteria colonies in it (not to mention the nitrogen and phosphorus it contains). Others believe they don't have time to stop and scoop or that it is just too unpleasant. Researching your audience to understand the barriers to getting people to pick up pet waste in their yards, on the beach, or wherever they walk their pets will help you craft your message to change their perceptions. Your message might include a photo of someone walking their dog on a beach where children are playing in the sand. Overcoming the perceived barriers to scooping the poop will result in more people changing their behavior. Appendix B provides a worksheet that will help you identify the barriers to adopting the behavior you're promoting and tips on how to overcome or reduce those barriers.

Social norms: Everyone's doing it!

Social norms are the standards of attitude and behavior perceived as normal, acceptable, and expected among the members of a community. For example, because most people buy red, white, black, or green cars, it becomes socially unacceptable to buy a hot pink car, even if hot pink is your favorite color. Car manufacturers don't even make cars in hot pink because they know people won't buy them. Social norms affect environmental issues in much the same way. If everyone else on your street maintains a bright green lawn by putting down lots of fertilizer four times a year, you're likely to follow suit whether your lawn needs fertilizer or not, feeling that you'll be judged by your neighbors if your lawn is not as green and lush as theirs.

So how can social norms be overcome? Outreach campaigns should be structured so that they give people new norms. They should inform people of the new acceptable behaviors. The agricultural community does this through farm demonstration projects. Farmers are more likely to adopt a new practice if they've seen that a neighbor is doing it and is benefitting from it. In addition, many manufacturers have become partners in a growing effort to reward sustainable behaviors through eco-labeling. Buying products labeled as ozone-friendly or recyclable makes people feel good about themselves and shows other buyers that they are environmentally savvy. Bumper stickers, T-shirts, and other rewards for environmental behavior are often great ways to establish new environmental social norms in your community. The goal is make it unacceptable to continue the behavior that has negative effects on water quality.

Critical mass

As mentioned previously, sociologists have found that when a new idea or behavior is adopted by roughly 15 to 20 percent of the audience, it will then have the critical mass it needs to permeate the rest of the audience, by word of mouth and observation. This social diffusion can be achieved by identifying the innovators and early adopters in the community, who are the most likely to try something different. Use them to set the new trend.

Survey says: Neighbors' opinions matter when it comes to lawn care

In 1999 the Survey Research Center of the University of Georgia conducted a telephone survey of homeowners on behalf of the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division of the Department of Natural Resources. The purpose was to assess the attitudes of Georgians toward a variety of topics related to lawn and landscape maintenance that affect environmental pollution.

The surveyors found that more than half of those polled considered it moderately to very important to have a yard appearing as attractive as their neighbors' yards. In addition, they learned that the principal source of gardening information used by Georgia homeowners is friends and neighbors (64 percent), followed by television (60 percent).

The roles people play

People engage in different behaviors based on the role they're playing at the time. Whether they're acting as parents, environmentalists, business owners, or developers makes a difference in what sustainable behaviors they'll adopt. When developing your outreach campaign, you might want to create different messages to address the different roles people have or use different formats and distribution mechanisms to reach them in those roles. If you're having trouble getting business owners to adopt recycling practices, for example, approach them as homeowners first. They might be more likely to overcome their perceived barriers to recycling at home before they're willing to do it at work.

Building Blocks: Target Audience

One of the objectives of the hypothetical Herndon County's watershed management plan is to reduce nutrient runoff coming from residential areas. The county's watershed planning committee agreed that focusing their efforts on reducing nutrient runoff will greatly improve water quality in the county. The county identified two audiences that need to be reached to reduce residential nutrient runoff: (1) homeowners and (2) homeowners' associations and apartment/condominium landscape managers. Two focus groups were held for each group in different parts of the county. In the focus groups, the county learned the following:

- Local garden and lawn supply stores recommend fertilizing twice a year
- Most homeowners get advice on lawn care from neighbors, friends, and family
- Busy schedules prevent many homeowners from taking an active role in environmental efforts
- Many residents have attended gardening workshops at the local community college
- Apartment/condominium landscape managers fertilize three times a year
- Apartment/condominium landscape managers are driven by the need to attract new residents with lush green lawns
- Both homeowners and apartment/condominium landscape managers are interested in protecting water quality

In addition, to measure awareness levels and to understand current lawn care practices, county staff conducted a random-digit-dialing survey of county residents. They learned that only 25 percent of county residents were aware that lawn fertilizer is a significant contributor to local water quality degradation.

Financial incentives

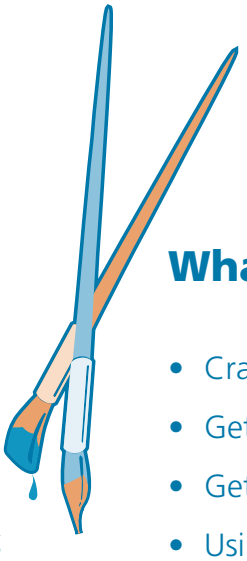
Financial incentives can also change the behaviors of people who believe that protecting the environment is too time-consuming or expensive. The new "Get Green" campaign, developed by the environmental advocacy group Environmental Defense and produced by the Ad Council, uses humor to offer viewers simple, everyday ways that they can help the environment. Get Green highlights how people can help the environment "get green" while helping themselves "get green" by saving money. Five TV public service announcements (PSAs) humorously depict the simplicity of incorporating environmental actions into daily lives. One PSA shows a man inflating his tires properly and saving money on gas. "Yeah," he says. "I save Mother Nature from pollution. But more important, she's already saved me 30 bucks!" Another shows a man who has just had his car tuned. It conveys the same message—saving the environment while saving money.

PROCESS CHECKLIST

Step 2: Identify and analyze the target audience

- ❑ Have I defined the audience in a way that separates it from the general public?
- ❑ How many target audiences or segments have I identified?
  Have I identified the opinion leaders, information disseminators, and gatekeepers in the target audience?
- ❑ Have I segmented the target audience so that I can develop messages for each subgroup?
- ❑ Is the target audience for each objective sufficiently defined?
- ❑ Have I identified the communication channels used by the target audience?
- ❑ Have I collected enough data on the target audience?
- ❑ How long will it take to collect survey data on the target audience?
- ❑ Do I understand the target audience?
- ❑ Do I know what is important to the target audience?
- ❑ Do I know what barriers prevent the target audience from changing its behavior?
- ❑ Are there barriers to accessing the target audience that can hinder the plan?

Step 3 Create the message



What's in Step 3

- Crafting the message
- Getting their attention
- Getting a response
- Using incentives and rewards
- Focusing on behaviors
- Message delivery

After gathering information on members of the target audience, you're ready to craft a message that will engage the audience's members and help achieve your water quality objectives. To be effective, messages must be understood by the target audience and appeal to the people on their own terms. Your message should be clear, specific, and tied directly to something the target audience values. In addition, the message should articulate what actions the receivers should take. These actions might include letting vegetation grow taller along a stream, pumping septic tanks, or conducting soil tests before fertilizing lawns. Messages that are vague or that don't contain specific calls to action—"We all contribute to nonpoint source pollution"—might help to build general awareness but are ineffective at changing behaviors.

Remember that your message is not simply a restatement of your objective. Your message will help achieve your objective, but the two are not the same. Objectives describe final results; messages prompt the knowledge, attitudes, and actions needed to obtain them.

Crafting the message

Messages are designed to raise general awareness, educate, or motivate action. If people aren't familiar with an issue or problem, awareness and education will have to precede any calls for action. For example, it is unrealistic to expect voters to approve a stormwater management bond referendum that will raise their property taxes by 4 percent unless they know what the money will be used for, why the expense is necessary, and who will benefit. Awareness and education activities—discussing the inadequacies of the current stormwater system, perhaps, and reviewing possible improvements—are usually required before asking people to take an action that will cost them time, resources, or money.

A careful analysis of your overall goal (e.g., improve water quality) and supporting objectives (e.g., reduce nutrient loadings, control sedimentation) will help you determine the best way to craft a message for the target audience. A variety of approaches are available. For example, in some cases the message might stress what

Messages already out there...

- After you flush, it just doesn't go away—*City of Portland, Oregon*
- Clean water, a bargain at any cost—*Water Environment Federation*
- Water Watch: What boaters can do to be environmentally friendly—*National Marine Manufacturers Association*
- Are you contaminating your drinking water?—*EPA*
- Pollution prevention: it's everyone's job—*U.S. Department of Energy*
- The Bay begins at your front door—*Santa Clara Valley Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program*
- Our environment... begins with your yard—*Virginia Department of Forestry and City of Virginia Beach*
- Go with the flow—understanding watersheds—*New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*
- Scoop the poop—*City of Austin, Texas, and Anchorage Waterways Council*
- Please don't feed the storm drain—*Texas Commission on Environmental Quality*

might be lost if the desired actions are not taken (water quality), rather than individual benefits (increased sense of social responsibility). Other approaches include highlighting potential threats, appealing to a common vision for improved conditions, and portraying the targeted behavior as cool, sophisticated, or otherwise desirable. Always pretest your message on a subset of the target audience and adjust it as necessary. Keep in mind that if your message is focused on getting people to take a specific action, they will be more likely to take part if the message also has a component that helps build awareness at the same time. A message like "Don't dump used motor oil down the storm drains" is much more effective if you add "because our storm drains drain to the bay." According to *Fostering Sustainable Behavior* by Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith, campaigns should simultaneously inform and suggest acceptable behaviors. People tend to do the right thing when they observe others doing it first. An example in *Fostering Sustainable Behavior* describes a group of psychologists performing a study on norms and recycling in 1990. They placed flyers on every windshield in a library parking lot. When a person was seen throwing the flyer in a trash can, no one else littered. When the person threw the flyer on the ground, over one-third followed suit.

Messages can appeal to the audience's hopes, fears, sense of responsibility, or personal benefits. Exploring the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of the audience regarding the subject of your message (through the research conducted in Step 2) can help you uncover messages that will resonate with the audience members. For example, a land manager might be more interested in the amount of time and money he can save by scaling back his existing mowing program than he is in the amount of nutrients and sediments trapped by the resulting vegetation. One developer might be most interested in complying with local erosion and sediment control ordinances and avoiding fines, whereas another might want to preserve habitat in an area of the river she fishes.

Be careful not to create a message that will easily become outdated. If your message involves getting people to support a new zoning ordinance that protects riparian corridors, you might be wasting your time if that ordinance is being spearheaded by a local politician who could be ousted in the next election. Don't ask residents to have their septic systems inspected if sewer lines are expected to be extended to their area within the next year. Make sure your message won't fade with current events or changes in administration. Consider omitting dates from print materials if they will be used for years to come.

The language and style of the message should match those of the target audience. If you're unsure about the reading level of the target audience, pretesting the message with representatives of the audience to determine its appropriateness will help. Consider displaying the message graphically if the target audience is not fully literate. If the

In Pennsylvania Amish country, convincing dairymen to fence their cows out of the stream worked only when the message appealed to the dairymen themselves. Creating a message that focused on herd health or other issues that the dairymen were interested in is what really worked.

Discussing your goals and objectives with members of the target audience through individual contact, focus group meetings, or audience research is highly recommended when developing the message.

Check out the Getting In Step video.

target audience's primary language is not English, lead off with their native language first and include an English version underneath, if needed. Always seek to understand and to be understood.

Getting their attention

Of course, the message will need to capture the attention of the target audience. Cutting through the clutter of the daily news, school schedules, work commitments, and social outings to grab the audience can be difficult. You need a hook—a way to make the message both lively and personal so that it resonates with the audience and prompts them to respond. The "package" or format of the message can help with this, but the message itself must command attention if it is to be acknowledged.

Effective hooks vary according to the audience. Technical audiences might be drawn to detailed trend charts, modeling results, or data displays on the effectiveness of best management practices (BMPs). Developers might want to know how much bang they're getting for their buck—what's the relative effectiveness of the proposed control measure, and how much will it cost? More general audiences might be engaged by information linked to the local drinking water sources or messages that have powerful emotional connections. The challenge will be finding a way to engage the audience directly without resorting to hyperbole or other inappropriate distortions.

Humorous messages can also attract attention. Keeping your message lighthearted makes people feel more comfortable with the topic and helps them feel less intimidated. For instance, if you're trying to generate stakeholder interest in providing input on a new watershed management plan, you might hold monthly backyard barbecues with the message "Come Grill Us About Your Watershed!"

Analogies or stories that vividly portray the scope of a problem, compelling questions, and appeals that stress rewards or threats can all help grab the attention of the target audience. For example, consider the following set of approaches for presenting similar information:

Less vivid	More vivid
There are about 26 million septic systems in the United States.	Septic systems treat and release about 4 billion gallons of wastewater per day.
Every month about 6,000 cubic yards of sediment is transported down the Red River.	The Red River carries the equivalent of 1,000 pickup truck loads of dirt every month.
Hog production in the five-county area generates approximately 750 tons of manure per day.	Hogs in our coastal counties produce more manure each day than a city of a half-million people.
Population is expected to increase about 15 percent annually over the next 5 years.	We'll need to build 10,000 homes, 6 schools, and a hospital by 2008 to keep up with current growth trends.

Using the information you collected on the target audience in Step 2, determine what will get this group's attention. Talk to people knowledgeable about the audience, convene focus groups of audience members, or research how others targeting that audience develop their outreach or marketing materials. Focus groups are particularly good venues for testing and obtaining feedback on various versions of outreach materials, messages, and other aspects of the effort. In a focus group conducted by EPA in 2001, participants mentioned that messages that clearly and dramatically demonstrate the immediate cause-and-effect relationship between personal polluting behaviors and resulting pollution are most effective. Messages aimed at educating teenage audiences must include elements that target that age group: the messages should be bold, hard-hitting, irreverent, and provocative.

Striking a balance between engaging the audience with a compelling hook and putting them off with hype, overwrought threats, or scare tactics requires careful consideration of the objective, the message, and the audience. Take time to explore how your message will be received and what reaction it is likely to evoke before you finalize and release it. Don't overwhelm your audience by trying to cover too many bases in one message. Keep it simple so the idea is not diluted. Delivering too much information at once doesn't work, even if you're addressing a complex issue.

Getting a response

Ask people to do something in your message, and let them know why it's important. It's not likely that they will do anything unless you specifically ask them. Below are some action steps an outreach campaign might promote:

- *Recycle your motor oil at any auto parts store in town.*
- *Seed and mulch bare ground within 14 days after removing vegetative cover.*
- *Save plastic grocery bags, and use them to scoop the poop from your pooch.*
- *Have your septic system inspected every 3 years and pumped as necessary.*
- *Make your lakeshore a no-mow zone!*

When asking people to take action, be very clear about what they should do, and make it easy to remember. Think about what behaviors are currently the norm and what behaviors you hope to make the norm. If you can reinforce the desired behavior by noting others who are engaging in it, so much the better. For example, farmers are much more likely to upgrade their livestock waste management practices if others are doing it. Asking people to take action is where the rubber meets the road in the world of voluntary BMPs. In many cases, your whole water quality improvement effort might be based on convinc-

ing X number of people to take Y number of Z actions. If this is the case, your outreach strategy needs to explore very carefully what type of appeal is most likely to work.

Make sure your message includes achievable personal goals, such as having your car inspected for leaks every 3 months. Reasonably achievable goals are more likely to be reached by small behavior changes that you might suggest. Provide incentives and rewards to encourage people to change their behaviors. Keep in mind that you're trying to get people to actually do something. Activities like distributing brochures, hosting workshops, placing ads on the radio, and holding field days are supporting tasks, not the objective itself!

Messages with incentives and rewards

Using financial incentives is one of the best ways to get people involved in your cause. Financial incentives are best used when research on the target audience suggests that people are unlikely to change their behaviors without an incentive. For example, providing discount cards from local businesses for participating in a household hazardous waste recycling event might encourage a few more residents to participate than would have otherwise. Other examples include paying homeowners a small stipend for agreeing to participate in focus group meetings, offering rebates for purchasing low-flow showerheads, and offering subsidized interest rates or tax breaks. Be sure that you build in ways to make people notice your incentive. Include information on financial incentives at the point of sale or in bill inserts so that people notice them at times when they are already thinking about money.

On the other hand, disincentives, such as fines for overwatering or cutting down trees within 50 feet of a stream bank, discourage people from taking actions you want them to avoid. Disincentives, like the rising cost of water due to high wastewater treatment costs, can be mentioned in printed materials and on radio and TV.

Bear in mind that when people are already motivated to change their behaviors, the use of financial incentives could undermine their motivation. In addition, if the incentive is taken away later on, that original motivation might be lost.

Deciding which behaviors to focus on

To create messages and encourage actions that will help you achieve your overall water quality objectives, you need to decide which behavior changes will give you the most for your money. Will you gain a greater reduction in overall sediment pollution by asking developers to avoid projects along streams and waterways or by asking construction site managers to plant vegetated buffers along stream banks? Which behavior change will be easier to measure? Which one is the

Free mowers mean more natural lawns

Every April King County, Washington, cosponsors a program to offer discounts on mulching mowers. The program began in 2000 when the county asked one local neighborhood to forego lawn chemicals and embrace grass mulching. Each of the households in the neighborhood was given a free Black and Decker electric mulching lawn mower (donated by Black and Decker), free lawn care consultations, and free environmentally friendly lawn care products. In return, residents were asked to pull weeds by hand, water their lawns less, and dispose of all their chemical pesticides. **(http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/ResRecy/events/naturalyard.shtml)**

audience more likely to adopt? Which behavior shows the most direct link to the problem? Which will be the easiest to promote, financially and technically? What barriers need to be overcome to motivate people to engage in that behavior? Thinking about these questions will help you choose the behaviors you should target in your campaign.

To make the behavior selection process easier, use a table like the one presented on page 34 for the Building Blocks case study box. A blank matrix is provided in Appendix C. By answering the questions in the table, you'll be able to score the potential behaviors you're considering and decide which behavior you should focus on to meet your goals and objectives. For example, when answering the question "Which behavior will be the most affordable to promote to my audience?", be sure to consider both the short-term and long-term costs you might incur while trying to encourage the adoption of each behavior. Think about the costs of outreach materials and formats, how the materials will be distributed, and who will help you distribute them. If the cost to promote a behavior is particularly high, you might want to focus on another behavior that will achieve the same result. The answers to most of the questions in the table will be found during the target audience analysis process you conducted earlier. Having focus group participants complete the table together is also a good way to zero in on behaviors. For each question, rank each behavior, starting with 1 as the behavior least likely to result in the best outcome for that question. Hints on how to answer the questions are provided in Appendix C along with a blank matrix.

Zeroing in on behavior through social marketing

As discussed in this guide, community-based social marketing is the most effective way to encourage behavior change. One of the leading experts on social marketing, Dr. Doug McKenzie-Mohr, an environmental psychologist specializing in designing programs to promote sustainable behavior, published *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing* in 1999. Dr. McKenzie-Mohr's approach involves identifying barriers to a sustainable behavior, designing a strategy that uses behavior change tools to overcome barriers, piloting the strategy with a small segment of a community, and evaluating the impact of the program once it has been implemented across a community. The behavior selection matrix on page 34 follows a similar path in that it is designed to help organizations choose the behavior that will be the easiest or most important to change.

For more information on Dr. McKenzie-Mohr's work, visit the McKenzie-Mohr & Associates Web site at **www.cbsm.com**.

Message delivery

The next section (Step 3) discusses formats and delivery mechanisms for your message; that is, how to get the message packaged and distributed. It's helpful to give some thought to message delivery when you're crafting and refining your message because the way it's delivered can significantly affect what happens next.

For example, outreach messages targeting business owners are better received and more powerful if a member of the business community delivers them. Integrating personal communication with a member of the target audience or another person during message delivery increases the chances that the desired action will be taken. Personal involvement can also help model the desired behavior and provide additional outreach and support for the message—and the target actions—after the initial outreach phase has been completed.

Building Blocks:

Creating the Message

One of the objectives of the hypothetical Herndon County's watershed management plan is to reduce nutrient runoff coming from residential areas. The county's public outreach committee agreed that focusing their outreach efforts on homeowners, homeowners' associations, and apartment/condominium landscape managers would greatly improve water quality in the county.

To help the committee members decide which behavior changes would give them the greatest benefit, they developed a behavior change matrix to compare six nutrient-reducing behaviors. The committee scored each behavior based on the results of the research it had conducted when identifying and analyzing its target audience. The behavior that received the highest score, reducing the number of times fertilizer is applied each year from twice to once, is the behavior the committee decided would provide the greatest reduction in nutrient runoff, considering the inclinations of the target audience. The matrix is shown on the following page. (See Appendix C for instructions and a blank matrix for you to use.)

After the committee selected which behavior to focus the campaign on, the county set out to create its message. From Step 2 (Identify and analyze the target audience), the county had learned that although many residents are interested in protecting the environment and their water resources, most simply do not have the extra time to take action. The county knew that it would be important to stress that reducing fertilizer application would save residents time and improve water quality while giving them a healthier lawn at the same time. The outreach campaign's message became the following:

Fertilize in the Fall. That's All!

With slow-release or organic fertilizers, you need to fertilize only once in the fall to help your grass grow new roots and store nutrients for next year's growth.

Sample Behavior Selection Matrix

Water Quality Objective: Reduce nutrient runoff from residential areas

Behavior	Evaluation Questions *Score from 1 to 6 (1 being the least likely; 6 being the most likely).* *Note: Behaviors may receive the same score if applicable.*									
	Which behavior will result in the highest reduction in pollution?	Which behavior will be the most affordable to promote to my audience?	Which behavior will be the most affordable for my audience to adopt?	Which behavior is the most attractive to the people in my community?	For which behavior will it be easiest to show a link to the problem?	Which behavior is the most sustainable?	Which behavior will have additional water quality benefits?	Which behavior will get the highest consumer response?	Which behavior has the fewest barriers to overcome?	Total Score *(sum of columns 1–9)*
Pick up pet waste	4	6	5	1	5	4	1	6	6	38
Reduce fertilizer application from twice a year to once a year	6	5	6	3	6	5	6	3	5	45
Plant streamside vegetation to filter out nutrients	5	2	2	4	1	6	6	4	2	32
Have septic systems inspected every 3 years and pumped as necessary	3	1	1	2	4	3	5	1	1	21
Leave grass clippings on the lawn	2	4	4	5	2	2	3	5	4	31
Plant native plants that require less fertilizer	1	3	3	6	3	3	4	6	3	32

Instructions:

1. Score each behavior based on the evaluation questions (1 being the least likely; 6 being the most likely).
2. Total each behavior score by adding the scores for each question.
3. The behavior with the highest score is the recommended behavior.

Note: *The results of this matrix will vary between communities. The factors may change depending on input from the target audience.*

PROCESS CHECKLIST

Step 3: Create the message

- ❑ Is the message relevant and accessible to the target audience?
- ❑ Is the language of the message appropriate to the target audience?
- ❑ Is the message specific for each audience, and will it resound with each?
- ❑ Can the message be understood by the target audience?
- ❑ Is the message vivid and memorable?
- ❑ Have I included personal goals in the message?
- ❑ Have I road-tested the message with members of the target audience?
- ❑ Can the target audience respond to the message in an easy, convenient way?
- ❑ Have I successfully identified which behaviors to ask the target audience to change?
- ❑ Does the message motivate behavior or attitude change?
- ❑ Have I considered how the message will be delivered?

Positives outweigh negatives

After engaging the members of the audience and exposing them to your message, you can provide other information you feel is important, such as environmental benefits. It's advisable, however, to let the audience members know first what their direct benefit will be. A word to the wise: Studies show that positive messages ("do this") tend to be more effective in changing people's habits than negative ones ("don't do this").

What's in Step 4

- Linking the audience and formats
- Considering formats
- Repeating the message
- Using the mass media
- Making videos
- Using print materials
- Conducting presentations
- Holding events
- Giveaways
- Mascots
- Using the Internet

Step 4 Package the message

You've defined the objectives, assessed the target audience, and crafted the message. Now it's time to determine the best package or format for the message for eventual delivery to the target audience. The information you collected in Step 2 will help determine the most appropriate format. A farming community might respond more positively to field day events, door-to-door visits, or articles in farm publications than to an Internet and e-mail campaign. When selecting your message format, think about where the target audience gets its information.

Linking the needs of the audience to the format

Making sure that you choose the right message format for the target audience is one of the most important steps in outreach. Several factors about the audience come into play:

- ***Size of the audience:*** If the target audience is large, a door-to-door campaign might not be feasible; if the audience is small, a grandiose community festival could waste valuable time and money.
- ***Geographic distribution of the audience:*** If the audience is widely distributed (such as across a rural county), presentations given at workshops might not be the best choice because participants would have to travel a long distance to get to them.
- ***Level of awareness and education:*** If the audience consists of new immigrants from non-English-speaking countries, newsletters or other written formats might not appeal to them; radio or TV public service announcements (PSAs) in their native language would be a better choice.
- ***Preferred formats:*** If the research you conducted on the audience revealed that most of the audience members have access to the Internet and use it regularly, a campaign-specific Web site might be an important element to include in your campaign.

Format considerations

In some cases, the format will define the distribution mechanism (newspaper articles, radio spots, public events). Keeping in mind the possibility of using multiple formats, consider the following:

- Is the package appropriate for the target audience?
- Is it user-friendly?
- Does it clearly communicate the message?
- How will the target audience access and use the information?

- Is it something they will see once and discard, or refer to often?
- Can it be produced in-house with existing resources?
- How much will it cost, and who will pay for it?
- Are there existing formats or templates that can be tapped into?
- Will it fit in a standard-sized envelope?

Keep in mind that the package and venue for any message are usually linked. For example, printed materials containing environmental messages are often criticized if they're not produced with high post-consumer-content recycled stock. Be mindful of the links between message, format, and distribution. In practice, this might mean announcing a river festival on brightly colored recycled paper or using a radio show on car maintenance to reach automotive do-it-yourselfers.

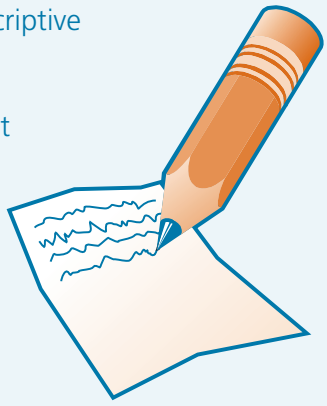
Repeating the message

In addition to being promotional vehicles for messages, formats often dictate the frequency of message presentation. Frequency is important because it determines how well the message will be remembered. Professional marketers know that the more times you

Sharpen your writing skills

There are no hard-and-fast rules or magical formulas for "good writing," but there are some solid guidelines that could add sparkle and strength to almost anyone's words.

- Make sure that your message targets the audience and will resonate favorably. Write simply and directly.
- Pay attention to grammar and punctuation, and avoid careless mistakes and typos. Consult a writing stylebook to double-check just where that comma or apostrophe should go, or ask someone with experience and a keen eye to edit the piece.
- Use the active voice.
- Write in simple declarative sentences. Make each word work. Avoid overuse of the thesaurus or your writing will sound stilted or pretentious. Use descriptive adjectives, but not too many.
- Make sure your writing conveys your intentions.
- Sometimes a new perspective and a fresh start are needed, so don't hesitate to start over if necessary. If you come down with a case of writer's block, you might be making too great a fuss over what you're writing. Sometimes it helps to just start writing, even if you begin at the middle or end of a piece. You can always go back and edit or enhance it later. Getting something on paper is the most important part.
- Avoid the use of technical terms, jargon, and acronyms unless the audience is familiar with them.



see their advertisement for a product, the more likely you'll remember the product and the more likely you'll buy it. Educating stakeholders and citizens on watershed or polluted runoff issues is no different: people remember what resonates with them and what is in front of them. As the saying goes, "out of sight, out of mind." So if your message is short, you might want to display it on a refrigerator magnet and keep it in front of the audience for months or even years. Other packages—rain gauges, calendars, Frisbees, news media pieces, printed materials, and so forth—all have their own pros and cons. Take time to explore them to see if they fit your program by linking objective, audience, and message.

Format options

The following is an overview of some popular formats; however, it is not meant to be comprehensive. Choose one format (or more) that helps achieve the desired result with the available resources. Combining formats can reinforce your message considerably. For example, promoting environmentally friendly agricultural practices through newspaper articles, farm field days, and "conserve our soil" ball caps can create interest in and support for such practices. Keep the target audience in mind while considering various formats.

If your campaign will last for a relatively long period of time, you have the option of using multiple formats over time. In fact, formats should change over the course of your outreach campaign to reflect the different phases of outreach—awareness, education, and action. This continuum calls for a broad, generic message at the outset to raise and increase awareness. As the target audience becomes aware of and interested in the issue(s), the messages and formats should become more specific. For example, generic radio and TV PSAs can lead into specific ads regarding pet waste, fertilizer use, and vehicle care.

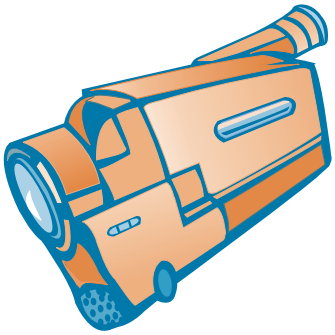
Each format has advantages and disadvantages, and you need to weigh these as you decide which format will resonate most and is most appropriate for the target audience. Other considerations when choosing a format include cost, staff time needed, setup time, production time, schedule, legal requirements, and audience type, level of education, and involvement in the issue. The table on pages 40 and 41 lists some of the pros and cons of each format and the circumstances under which each format is best applied.

The following sections present the formats from the table and provide tips for increasing the effectiveness of these formats.

Mass media formats

If your message needs to be understood and embraced by the public, it must be covered by the mass media. The media are the most cost-effective and efficient way to get your message delivered. Partnering

with the news media—newspapers, TV, magazines, radio—is not difficult, but it requires some orientation and basic training on how to involve them in your outreach effort.



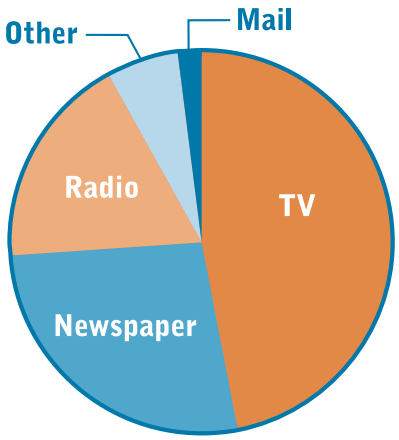
Opportunities to place your message in the media include informational news stories, people features, issue analyses, PSAs, interview programs, call-in shows, editorial columns, and feature items related to sports, recreation, or outdoor living. Each of these formats requires different techniques, which are discussed below.

Formats using the mass media can be broken down into two major categories: news coverage and advertising. News coverage includes interviews, news stories, letters to the editor, and event coverage. Advertising includes the development of PSAs. Publicity generated from news coverage is dependent on the news organization, whereas you create radio, TV, and newspaper advertising yourself. In many cases the advertising that you do can be leveraged later into news coverage. For example, one state bought informational ads on agriculture-related water quality issues from a country station and received as a benefit some free news coverage of the issues during the year.

News coverage

Why use the news media?

Americans are voracious consumers of news and information, and information on water and other science issues is not much different from information on health, economics, or sports. A survey conducted by Lake Research, Inc., for the Upper Mississippi River Basin found that 47 percent of watershed residents get their information on river issues from local television news, 27 percent from local newspapers, and 18 percent from radio news. Only 2 percent of those surveyed mentioned environmental mailings as their first or second news source, and meetings didn't even make the list. Nearly every study conducted in the United States over the past decade has concluded that most people—even those involved in scientific or water resource issues—get their environmental information from the news media. Obviously, the news media have tremendous reach when it comes to communicating watershed messages to both targeted and broad audiences.



Sources of Environmental News

The news is free!

The news media are effective, available, and free. Surveys repeatedly show high public interest in environmental issues and in water quality, particularly as it relates to drinking water, public health, and recreational uses. Reporters are always looking for news—informative articles, features on people or issues, or regular columns—to fill their pages or broadcasts. Packaging your messages as news stories can help distribute your information to mass audiences at virtually no cost. You have to buy an ad, but placing your message in the news is free. The trade-off is that you do not control the message, timing, or frequency of the news story.

Choosing the Right Format			
Format	**Pros**	**Cons**	**Uses**
TV news coverage	• Creates awareness, publicity, and recognition • Most popular source of environmental information • Free • Can reach a large captive audience • Can include graphics and video • Most people would rather watch than read	• Working with reporters takes time and patience • Reporters might change focus of desired coverage • Training on giving interviews might be needed	• Events • Weekly reports • Hot topics • Controversial issues • Public education
Advertising with TV or Radio PSAs	• Can be free to air • Can reach a large audience • Can focus in on target audience • Can provide follow-up through toll-free medium (hotline or Web site) • TV ads provide high impact and the ability to demonstrate a behavior	• Stiff competition for air time • Very passive • Difficult to evaluate effectiveness • Can be expensive to produce TV PSAs of suitable quality • Short format often does not allow for more than awareness • Little control of time of airing without paying; sometimes aired late at night • Message can be obscured by commercial clutter • Target audience might not be watching/listening when advertisement is aired	• Events • Fundraisers • Building awareness
Videos	• Can discuss an issue in depth • Have control over the content • Can be visually appealing • Can air on cable television stations	• High costs • Hard to do well • Need a good distribution mechanism	• Workshops • Public education • Schools
Printed formats such as newsletters and brochures	• Can reach a large audience • Can be more technical than other formats • Can tailor messages for specific audiences for different publications • Go beyond building awareness by providing detailed information • Reach more educated audiences • Audience can clip, reread, and think about the material • Might provide more credibility • Often low-cost (with unit prices decreasing with quantity) • Good to use as a follow-up mechanism	• Printing and mailing are costly • Require staff time • Passive, not participatory • Only as good as the mailing list used or kiosks and help desks where placed • Audience must have the interest to pick them up and read them • Small ads might not be noticed	• Articles and interviews • Events (announcing and summarizing) • Workshops • Scientific data • Requesting feedback from public • Public education

Choosing the Right Format (cont.)			
Format	**Pros**	**Cons**	**Uses**
Events	• Good for persuasion • Can model positive behavior • More personal • Offer two-way communication	• Might be difficult to reach entire audience • Require staff time • Could be expensive • Potential low attendance • Require significant planning time • Require publicity for success • Can damage reputation if not done well	• Awareness and recognition • One-on-one communication • Encouraging and modeling behavior change (motivating action)
Presentations - *workshops* - *conferences* - *group meetings*	• Can be participatory • Good for persuasion • Can model positive behavior • More personal	• Reach small audiences • Require staff time • Can be too technical • Hard to get commitment to attend; need to offer incentives • Person delivering the presentation could make or break it	• Getting feedback from attendees • Awareness and recognition • Public education
Giveaways	• Increase awareness • Inexpensive • Easy to produce	• Very short message • Not very persuasive • Materials themselves might be considered "pollution" or "junk"	• Awareness building • Distribution at events and workshops • Incentives for participation • Behavior reminders (prompts)
Web sites	• Can reach a large audience • Inexpensive • Easily maintained • Offer up-to-date information	• A challenge to market • Difficult to evaluate effectiveness • A long-term project	• Public education • Returning visitors if material is updated frequently
Internet Listservers	• Can reach a discrete audience • Inexpensive • Easily maintained	• May be spreading the message to an already educated audience • Long-term project	• Ongoing projects or complex campaigns • Public education
Displays - *libraries* - *malls* - *fairs/ events*	• Can reach a large audience • Visually pleasing • Reusable	• Require staff time • Must be durable • Can be specific to an event, which can date the materials	• Awareness and recognition
Billboards	• Can reach a large audience • Visually pleasing	• Very short message • Drivers might not read billboards that require high amounts of attention • Generally high costs	• Awareness and recognition • Behavior reminders (prompts)

Reporters often cover water quality issues debated at public meetings and other events. Expanding coverage through a planned, proactive approach can help build and support new attitudes, generate interest in remediation projects, promote possible solutions to water quality problems, introduce and explain policy or funding proposals, and motivate or reinforce volunteers in the field. Public agencies are discovering that working with the media helps in building awareness of agency activities, responding quickly to public concerns, explaining technical issues, and clarifying enforcement programs.

When using the media, or any other message distribution format, it's helpful to remember the standard formula for producing results in marketing campaigns: *Reach* × *frequency* = *results.*

The number of people receiving your message (reach) multiplied by the number of times they receive it will determine the results of your effort. Hitting the target audience once with a great message just won't do the job. They have to hear it over and over again—just like preschoolers learning their ABCs. That's why you see the same ads broadcast time after time on TV and radio. After a while, the marketers know their message will break through the clutter and resonate with you, possibly motivating you to buy the product or vote for the candidate.

Delivering educational, promotional, or motivational messages through the news media is similar to distributing them through other mechanisms. If you want results, you need to repeat the message frequently and link it to something the audience values. Covering watershed issues from several different angles can help accomplish this. Orienting yourself to the workings of the media and the needs of reporters will help keep your program focused and effective.

Becoming a student of the media (rather than just a consumer) can help you discover important information about how a particular media outlet covers the news—things like who reports on environmental issues, what's been covered so far, and what topics are the subject of editorials. Developing some knowledge of a media outlet will help later, when you're discussing possible coverage for your events or issues.

What makes the news?

Certain key elements apply to what is covered as news. Good news stories have at least one of the following attributes:

- Involve local people or issues/documented statistics
- Focus on unique or unusual attributes
- Relate to significant issues or events
- Quote well-known or respected members of the community
- Affect many people throughout a region
- Involve controversial issues or strong emotions
- Include a celebrity figure
- Are timely

Your outreach or educational messages won't be required to have all these significant elements, but the more they have, the more likely they'll be covered by the media. This aspect of media involvement shouldn't be discouraging: a quick look at any newspaper or TV news broadcast provides a glimpse of how thin the thread of "significance" can be. The news is filled with information on research studies, government activities, business developments, societal trends and fads,

sporting events, and other sometimes less-than-weighty concerns. The involvement of a celebrity can provide a huge boost to your outreach effort by generating significant media interest. When Backstreet Boys singer Kevin Richardson created the Just Within Reach Foundation (www.justwithinreach.com) to push for greater environmental responsibility in his native Kentucky, media coverage of water quality and other issues skyrocketed. With a little thought and planning, you should have no problem placing your message in the news.

How do I "do" the news?

If you've considered what makes a message newsworthy, you'll have no problems packaging your watershed outreach and educational information for reporters. The simple recipe is to identify the nugget of your message that contains the news (the elements noted in the previous section), and incorporate other information designed to educate, engage, or motivate the audience. The news nugget (think "headline") will determine the likelihood and type of coverage, so it's important to think about how it can best be presented to achieve the intended outreach objective without boring the audience. To educate or motivate, it's necessary to attract and hold the attention of the target group. Watershed issues can be vibrant, complex, engaging, compelling, and incredibly interesting—much like the watersheds themselves. Reflect this in your messages.

How can you do this? First, think like a reporter: What would be interesting? It doesn't have to be earth-shattering. Consider the following headlines, which summarize news nuggets you can build an article or broadcast feature around:

- Monitoring results show no gains in water quality
- Workshops improving sediment controls on building sites, group says
- Neighbors take a break from lakeside mowing, watch wildflowers bloom
- Health Department urging septic system inspections
- Mayor Smith to host stream restoration workshop at local restaurant

You get the idea. You're doing a lot of interesting stuff. Make your news appealing to reporters so they can make it interesting to the target audience.

Keep in mind that our society is experiencing information overload, so it's crucial that you get your information out in plain language, in easily digestible chunks, and in a form that will be used. Because of the immediacy of the Internet, many reporters and writers no longer have daily deadlines. Stories are often posted as soon as they're written.

Get the reporters in your corner

In Utah, the Kids Organized to Protect Our Environment (KOPE) developed a personal rapport with local TV news reporters to gain coverage of their efforts to protect an urban stream from being converted to a shopping center parking lot. The reporters, who then became advocates on a personal level, turned out to cover city council meetings, cleanup days, and community festivals organized by the kids to protect the stream. According to Lynn Olsen, a parent volunteer for KOPE, "The reporters would write their stories in order to tell the children's point of view."

Check out the Getting In Step video.

Establishing a relationship with the media

After you've become oriented to the perspectives of the media and have packaged your outreach information accordingly, you'll be ready to discuss coverage with reporters or news editors. Establishing a relationship with reporters and editorial staff is just as important as developing the news element of your message—perhaps even more important. This point cannot be overemphasized. In fact, it's highly recommended that you introduce yourself to the news staff and start developing a relationship before you submit anything for coverage. Establishing a dialogue with reporters on what you're trying to accomplish with your outreach program will help both of you determine how to meet each other's needs.

After the reporting staff knows who you are and what you're doing, they might call and ask you to respond to questions on other water quality news stories. If you don't have anything to offer, ask them about their deadline and try to get the information to them before the deadline. You're trying to establish and maintain a positive, helpful relationship with the news staff so both of you can better serve the public.

It's important to realize that reporters are usually working under the pressure of a deadline and don't like runarounds. They become agitated and suspicious if you are slow to release information, especially if it's public information subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Also, remember that very few reporters are trained in the sciences. It will be your job to provide a rudimentary education on watershed science—why things like suspended solids, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, bacteria, and riparian cover are important.

Developing a relationship with reporters and helping them to understand your issues will pay off in increased reporting, better media relations, and fewer factual distortions. Providing reporters with appropriate background information (no more than three or four pages unless asked) and identifying interview subjects also helps. Be proactive rather than reactive.

Levels of doing the news

At the most basic level, "doing the news" means providing a steady stream of interesting, educational, informative material related to a news nugget that appears in the first paragraph of the release. In a watershed outreach program, releases should support objectives identified by the planning and management team. They should be designed to educate, inform, engage, or motivate members of the target audience or to build general awareness, support, and interest. If an event is being planned, a news advisory can be issued to tell the media where, when, and why it's occurring and who will be there.

If there is significant interest on the part of the media and their audience, you might consider proposing more in-depth coverage. Feature articles, interview programs, status/trends analyses, and news forums all provide an opportunity for informing and educating the public and policy makers on the sometimes complex array of issues and answers related to water quality problems. Be forewarned: These projects can involve a lot of research and a lot of work. Producing a biweekly column on water monitoring trends for Ten Mile Lake, for example, will entail a significant commitment to collect the data and meet printing deadlines. But the opportunity to reach thousands of people with this information might make such an endeavor worthwhile. People think about only what's in front of them. Water quality issues are for the most part public policy issues, and the more you can help the media explain these issues and review what needs to be done, the better the ultimate solutions are likely to be.

News coverage formats: News releases

News releases provide reporters with the basics they need to develop a news story. They can be written in a news style so that they can be used "as is," although good reporters will prefer to rewrite your story in their own words. News releases include the who, what, when, where, why, and how of your story. In large cities TV stations and newspapers receive many releases each day, so it's important to hit the high points without going on ad infinitum. One- or two-page news releases are standard. If a reporter chooses to expand your news release into a longer story, he or she will contact you for more information.

When reviewing news releases, reporters typically look for one primary element—a local connection. Releases that indicate reporters should "insert name of county here" are often tossed immediately. Mention a local person or the appropriate city, county, river, lake, or stream in the first paragraph to generate maximum interest.

News releases are an efficient way to alert the public about a wide variety of issues. Use them to announce public events, summarize water monitoring information, discuss policy development issues, provide perspectives on improving water quality, or encourage the adoption of appropriate management practices. "Think Blue," San Diego's stormwater pollution prevention outreach program, protects local beaches with TV and radio PSAs, brochures, fact sheets, and more. When the program won four Emmy awards for its TV PSA, it announced the win in a news release (see box on page 46). Note the mention of the local city, San Diego, in the first line of the release.


Check out the Getting In Step video.

Bringing the media to you

Taking reporters out on monitoring field trips in the summer might be the most beneficial thing a public agency or private organization can do to further the education of reporters—and, more important, their audiences—on water quality issues. The news business is typically slow in the summer, and reporters have time to spend in the field. Taking them out to collect macroinvertebrates, monitor lake water quality, conduct field surveys, sample dissolved oxygen and pH, or count bacteria colonies in the lab gives you an opportunity to get to know them on a more personal basis, without the pressure of phone tag, deadlines, or hot issues.

Reporters are naturally inquisitive people, but most know little about designated uses, use-based water quality criteria, types of criteria, TMDLs, best management practices, and the like. In the field, you can explain the role of your organization and provide a summary education to reporters on water quality issues of importance to your area. Later, when an important or controversial issue arises, the reporters will have a good idea of who you are and what you're doing and will likely call you to discuss the perspective of your group before releasing a story.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Deborah Castillo, City of San Diego, (619) 525-8649,
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"THINK BLUE" PSA TAKES HOME FOUR EMMY AWARDS

San Diego—June 17, 2002 - The City of San Diego's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program and American Dream Cinema were big winners at the 28th annual regional Emmy Awards Saturday, June 15. Nominated in six categories, the "Think Blue: Roads to Beaches" Public Service Announcement (PSA) dominated, winning in four of the six categories.

The awards were handed out by the Pacific Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in a ceremony at the U.S. Grant Hotel. Taking home the Emmy were Greg Youtsey for Outstanding Achievement in Audio for a Spot, Jim Orr for Outstanding Achievement in Photography (Spot), and Ernie Anderson, Deborah Castillo, William Yancey and Jeanne Scott for Outstanding Achievement in Writing (Spot) and Outstanding Achievement for a Public Service Announcement.

The "Roads to Beaches" PSA was one of three produced by the City's Storm Water Program in the first year of its media campaign. In addition to "Roads to Beaches," the Storm Water Program produced two other PSAs with Four Square Productions, which was also nominated for its "Think Blue: Water Babies" PSA.

"This is a wonderful achievement for the City of San Diego and our program," said Program Director Ernie Anderson. "It is not often that a government agency has the opportunity to do something like this and attain such wonderful recognition."

The emphasis of the "Think Blue" campaign is to educate San Diego residents, businesses and industry about storm water pollution, which accounts for approximately 90% of all beach postings and closures in the City and threatens the quality of living that San Diego is known for.

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Be sure to send the news release in a timely manner. Releases sent too early might get lost on the reporter's desk, and releases sent too late might not make it into the newspaper. If you'd like reporters to attend a coming event, send releases 5 days in advance. Other releases should be sent a few days before the newspaper's deadline. Make a follow-up call to each reporter to confirm receipt of the release and respond to any questions.

How to write a news release

News releases are usually one page long, but they can be longer if the subject is sufficiently important. When writing a news release, start with the local connection and "news nugget"—the most important element—first. Then present supporting information, putting the least important material at the end. It's important to grab the reporter's attention in the first paragraph. Quotes from a spokesperson can be included, although many newspapers might want to confirm direct quotes prior to publication.

What makes the news? To increase the chances that your release will be used, keep in mind the elements reporters look for in a news story. Your release doesn't need to have all the elements listed below, but the more of them you include, the better your chances for coverage:

- Involve local people or issues/documented statistics
- Focus on unique or unusual attributes
- Relate to significant issues or events
- Quote well-known or respected members of the community
- Affect many people throughout a region
- Involve controversial issues or strong emotions
- Include a celebrity figure
- Are timely

How to send the news release to the media outlet

The news media are a target audience just like any other audience. Get to know the reporters that cover the environmental beat ahead of time, and ask them how you should format your releases. Many now prefer e-mail but want the text pasted into the body of the e-mail message rather than included in attachments because of potential virus threats. Newspapers and TV news programs often want relevant graphics like photos or graphs of water monitoring trends. Ask reporters what type of format they prefer and how material should be delivered.

Here are some tips for writing news releases:

- Keep sentences short
- Avoid jargon
- Write in the active voice
- Keep paragraphs short
- Ask for peer editing
- Proofread, proofread, proofread!

News release nuts and bolts

- Include "For immediate release," the date, and the name and phone number of the contact person at the top
- Use a catchy headline, touching on the news nugget
- Include short paragraphs telling who, what, where, when, why, and how
- Add "###" at the bottom center of the page to indicate the end of the document
- If the document has two pages, put "more" at the bottom of the first page rather than "###"

News coverage formats: video news releases

A video news release (VNR) is the TV equivalent of a written press release, and it is becoming an increasingly important piece of outreach campaigns. A video news release greatly increases your odds that TV news programs will cover your story. As you would for a written news release, you establish the story angle and control the content, but stations are free to embellish or otherwise change the story before they decide to run it. And just like a news release, the media may reject your story altogether. That's why it's important to ensure that your message is newsworthy, well presented, and well produced.

A VNR is a pre-produced (pre-taped, edited, and narrated) news item for TV. It is typically 1 to 3 minutes long, often with an additional 3 to 6 minutes of b-roll (raw footage). A VNR often includes interviews with experts who provide effective sound bites that bring out the core of your message, as well as supporting visuals. It usually opens with a background slate (a text screen that contains summary information such as the date, the name of your organization, the name of the project, and contact information) that stays on the screen for about 5 seconds. The VNR should be shot in a broadcast news style with quick cuts, steady shots, offset interviews, and the like. Here are some other tips for creating effective VNRs:

- Hire a professional production company to do the script-writing, shooting, and editing, unless you have access to staff members or partners who have such talents.
- Include a very brief, one-sentence summary of the story on the opening slate as the "Suggested Anchor Lead," which a local news anchor can read at the top of the story.
- Ask the experts interviewed for the VNR to look at the interviewer slightly off-camera to the right or left, not directly into the camera.
- Encourage the press to call the key interviewers or other experts directly to confirm the information they have received.
- Use graphics and animation to illustrate key points of technical or complex stories.
- Ask the production company to present all the names and titles of people interviewed in or speaking on the video (called "supers" or "chyrons") on a slate at the start of the VNR rather than on the tape during the VNR. This approach will allow a station to recreate this information in its own type style. Be sure the sequence of names on the slate matches the order of appearance in the VNR.
- Shoot, edit, and reproduce the VNR in a broadcast-quality format such as Betacam, DVC-Pro, or Mini-DV. Check with the station to find out which format(s) it uses.

The VNR is an effective way to get press coverage of a particularly newsworthy issue or event. With TV news budget cuts, there is an escalating demand for more pre-produced material. A well-produced VNR can often receive excellent pickup from local news stations.

The VNR is sent directly to local TV stations or can even be transmitted via satellite feeds to regional or national audiences. For local or regional campaigns, follow up by calling the stations on which you would like to see your VNR aired. VNRs are used by many stations because it saves them time and effort they would otherwise spend producing stories from scratch. Though more costly than a press release, a well-produced VNR can potentially propel your message into millions of homes. Many companies can provide this service or assist you in this effort.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources spends about $80,000 annually to produce VNRs that reach more than 8 million viewers each year (a cost of about one cent per person—an extremely low delivery cost). Read more about Minnesota's VNRs at www.dnr.state.mn.us/new/vnr/faq.html.

News coverage formats: Letters to the editor

A letter to the editor is a good way to raise awareness of issues, concerns, or conditions that should be brought to the attention of the public. Individual citizens and organizations often write letters to the editor to clarify previously printed articles or to introduce a subject that someone believes should be discussed. When sending a letter to the editor, check out the newspaper's requirements. Most papers ask that letters be 250 words or less and reserve the right to edit your letter before publishing it. Include your contact information in case the paper would like to speak with you further. Many newspapers have a page on their Web sites where you can submit your letter online.

Tips for writing a letter to the editor

- **Be brief, clear, and to the point**
- **Sign your name and note your affiliation**
- **Talk about the issues; don't get personal or petty**
- **Type your letter and limit it to the paper's length restriction (make it significantly shorter if possible)**
- **One letter per month per person is the limit for most papers**
- **Send your letter to a single paper; most papers require published letters to be exclusives**

News coverage formats: Query letters

A query letter is sent to the editorial staff to determine potential interest in a story idea. Prior contact with the staff is recommended before you submit a story or even write it. Give the editor a chance to reject or redirect it before you expend any significant resources. Usually the query is made through a letter, but e-mails can be sent if the editor accepts them. Check each organization's Web site or call and ask the news desk for its preferred format. The inquiry should describe the general content of the proposed piece, state the title or working title, if there is one, and address why the issue is relevant to the community. The topic should be well researched, and the query letter should be no longer than one page.

News coverage formats: News conferences

If you have some breaking information or an event that's too important for a news release, a news conference might be appropriate. Don't call a news conference unless there's big news. Calling a conference to cover routine issues or to generate publicity is like "crying wolf" to the media and could hurt your turnout for more important news conferences.

News conferences are important events that require thoughtful planning. A good moderator—one who can control the event without stifling the reporters—is needed. Usually a news conference opens with the distribution of a news release that explains the reason for the conference and provides informative quotes from people involved in the issue, background information, and contact information. The moderator then makes a few welcoming/introductory remarks and introduces other speakers or makes a statement (which is often read). Remarks by all speakers should be carefully prepared. The floor is then opened for questions, which usually can be anticipated and prepared for beforehand. Spend a little time in the days or hours before the news conference generating a list of likely questions, so you'll be able to respond confidently and accurately.

Make sure you invite all news outlets in the area to your conference, and send a news release immediately afterward to those who didn't show up. News conferences can be held almost anywhere but are usually indoors with plenty of seating provided. Backdrops and other props are good elements for enhancing TV potential. Holding a news conference at the edge of a polluted stream, in front of a storm drain, or at another location that leaves a lasting impression will add interest to your news; however, you should arrange for a contingency location for bad weather. After the news conference (usually a half-hour), invite reporters to accompany members of your group on a prearranged tour, if appropriate, to provide additional insight on the issue.

Advertising

Advertising differs from news coverage in that you are in control of what is aired or printed. Videos are increasingly becoming popular formats to showcase projects or organizations. However, the most common form of advertising is the public service announcement. A PSA is an effective way to use TV or radio airtime to raise public awareness about an issue, inform the public about a coming event, or recruit volunteers. A PSA can be written or presented in audio or video format. Though PSAs cover less material than news releases, they include the same "who, what, where, when, why, and how."

Advertising formats: The radio PSA

Even in this TV-focused world, radio remains a strong media contender because of its affordable production cost and creative possibilities. Radio is everywhere and nearly everyone hears it sometime, somewhere, every day. According to Arbitron, an international media and marketing research firm, radio reaches 96 percent of people over age 12 each week and 77 percent each day! Of course, those same universal qualities are what dilute its impact: it can become background noise. Your message must be repeated often to reach listeners at various times. Targeting specific audiences—young people, farmers, public radio listeners—is relatively easy to do in radio, given the specialized formats in most markets. To saturate whole markets, you'll need to distribute your message to many stations. Get right to the central theme (the point you want to project) because you don't have much time.

Getting the facts from the station. Radio stations play PSAs on free or purchased airtime. Purchasing airtime will increase the frequency at which your PSAs are played. Use the target audience demographics to help select the radio stations you want to broadcast your PSAs. Request a rate kit from all of the AM and FM radio stations in your geographic area. The average rate kit should contain statistical profiles of the age, gender, and consumer buying patterns of the station's audience; a breakdown of listener activity by time; descriptions of network affiliates; sample advertising packages; and a rate card. The rate card is a cost guideline only; in broadcasting, nearly all prices are negotiable.

The station's advertising sales representative will work with you to assemble a media schedule that fits your objectives and your pocketbook. Remember the reach and frequency factors. When working with a small budget, frequency is what matters most. That's because you might need to run your ad several times a week to make your message sink in. If you spend your advertising budget reaching many people just a few times, your investment will be in vain. Instead of reaching 100 percent of the audience once, reach 10 percent of the audience 10 times. That's the best way to get quality results on a limited budget.

To pay or not to pay

Although technically you can have your PSAs aired on TV at no cost (free airtime), you will not necessarily hit your target audience. By purchasing airtime, you can ensure that you'll reach your audience and can often leverage additional coverage.

San Diego's "Think Blue" program leveraged the airtime they purchased for their PSAs for more than $250,000 with 32 local broadcasters to receive additional coverage for free. Local broadcasters contributed 774 free airings of the PSAs, 40 news story features, and other promos for an in-kind value in excess of $160,000.

Watershed Radio

The Watershed Radio program, an environmental education project for the Chesapeake Bay watershed, produced a series of 1-minute radio PSAs that highlight different aspects of the watershed. Twelve radio stations spread out over the watershed broadcasted the Watershed Radio PSAs. One of the PSAs is used as an example in the box "How to write and format a PSA" on page 53. For more information, visit **www.serc.si.edu/watershed/index.htm**. Watershed Radio was created by the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and the Sierra Club.

Sea & Shore Radio

In 2001 the Maine Coastal Program, the Maine Sea Grant College Program, and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve reached a wide audience with basic information about the Maine coast's environmental resources through a 1-minute radio series called the Sea & Shore Educational Radio Program. The series featured a range of coastal and marine environmental topics, including beach health, marine debris, and salt marshes. For more information about the series, contact Paul Dest, Maine Coastal Program, at dest@wellsnerrcec.lib.me.us.

Radio stations typically do not guarantee the frequency or times for playing PSAs during free airtime. Many people think that the Federal Communications Commission requires radio and TV stations to allocate a certain amount of time to public service. However, the National Association of Broadcasters says that broadcasters are under no obligation to grant time to any specific group. In recent years, the government deregulated the industry to reduce the amount of paperwork required for radio and TV stations, and it gave stations the ability to set their own standards for PSA usage on both free and paid airtime.

Local radio stations often have feature programs but don't cover news in depth. Public stations might devote more time to news, analytical, or educational programs, but they might not reach the target audience. Although the extremely short nature of spot news coverage on radio does not lend itself well to deep analysis and lengthy information delivery, radio can play a valuable role in building awareness and reinforcing other outreach efforts.

What does it cost? If you plan to produce a recorded PSA, first determine how you will produce the message itself. Because radio is not a visual medium, a radio PSA "must be even better and more creative than television, even though you will spend a lot more on TV production," notes Roger Vilsack, an award-winning producer with more than 25 years of experience. "Because you don't have visual images, you have to create them with words and sound effects." Hire talented persons comfortable with acting out their parts rather than simply reading aloud. Vilsack recommends budgeting from $1,500 to $10,000 for the radio production, depending on the number of actors, music, and sound effects. If you hire a director, writer, or actor, the cost could increase an additional $2,500 to $5,000.

Asking a college or public radio station to help produce your radio spots might pay off. College students are usually interested in watershed issues and are often looking for projects that can be listed on resumes for consideration by prospective employers. Your campaign can help students develop experience and professional skills while raising awareness and support for watershed issues.

Tools of the trade. Once you've determined how you will produce the radio PSA, find out which format you need to use for submission. In the past radio stations accepted cassette or reel-to-reel tapes. Now the preferred format is CD-ROM. The production company will provide a music disc with the PSA track included for you to distribute. If you produce multiple PSAs or one PSA in multiple languages, include them all on the same CD-ROM to save time and money.

Remember to label your CD-ROM and its case with the PSA's title and length, and your contact information. Some types of CD-ROM packages are DiskPac (lightweight plastic case with a four-color printer cover that is glued to the plastic shell), wallet style (wallet-sized pocket

How to write and format a radio PSA

1. Use paper with the organization's letterhead.
2. Type "Public Service Announcement" at the top middle of the page.
3. Skip a few spaces.
4. Type the requested air date.
5. Insert the organization's contact name, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and PSA length.
6. Skip a few lines.
7. Insert the PSA's title in bold letters.
8. The script should provide a brief description of the event/issue, including the who, what, when, where, why, and how.
9. The script should close with the name of your organization and where to go for more information.
10. Close the document with "###" at the bottom middle of the page.

Example:

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Requested Air Date: February 15, 2002

Watershed Radio
Smithsonian Environmental Research Center
Janis Oppelt
Phone: (301) 474-5358
Fax: (301) 261-3415 E-mail: janiso@erols.com
PSA Length: 60 seconds

From the Blue Ridge to the Bay, it's Watershed...

(music)

Nutrients, like phosphorus and nitrogen, from urban and agricultural areas are polluting the Chesapeake Bay. This is called nonpoint source pollution because it cannot be traced back to one particular source. Scientists, like those at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, measure nutrient levels in bay tributaries and, with the help of aerial photographs and many hours in the field, relate those nutrient levels to information about land use, especially in areas close to streams. The work is very labor-intensive, but the better we understand the source of the pollution, the more we can do to clean up the bay.

Watershed Radio is produced by the Sierra Club and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. For more information, visit watershedradio.org.

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Going online?

With the increased household use of the Internet, many outreach campaigns are relying more on placing PSAs online. Leading market research firms believe that before this decade ends Americans will get most of their information from the Internet and other interactive technologies. Although only 21 percent, or about 40 million American adults, were connected to the Internet in 1995 (National Science Foundation, **www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/seind00/frames.htm**), today more than 167 million adults regularly log on at home or at work (Jim Nail, "Online Advertising Eclipsed," Forester Research, 2001). The Ad Council recently reported approximately $391 million in donated advertising space generated from online placements alone—an increase of 500 percent from the year before. The difficulty with online placement is finding out what sites your target audience visits. If your ads are aimed at children, it would be appropriate to post ads on Yahooligans (**www.yahooligans.com**), the Yahoo! page dedicated to kids.

folder printed on heavy-duty card stock), and script booklet style (an 8½-inch by 11-inch folder that can include a script booklet, CD-ROM, and evaluation reply card).

Script booklets can help radio stations learn more about your topic and your organization. They can include the recorded PSA script, additional live announcer scripts, and contact information. The Make-A-Wish Foundation, for example, used a script booklet to provide additional media information for the radio stations and a list of its local office locations.

To minimize production costs, prepare and send in scripts for live radio. Typed and double-spaced copy is required for community calendars and other public notice programs. Tying your release to a special day or event (such as Earth Day) and updating it with different angles later will make it more attractive. Take time to ensure scripts are written for the ear, and support your submissions with follow-up calls or letters, or even promotional items like posters. Remember that airtime for PSAs is available for free, but sometimes the time slots are late at night or very early in the morning. Avoid basing a significant part of an outreach campaign on free radio PSAs unless you are sure that this is the best way to reach the target audience. If possible, purchase airtime for your PSA to expand its reach.

Find a good radio voice to deliver your message (if the radio announcer is not the reader). You'll know such a voice when you hear it: it's full, rich, and resonant with good intonation and pronunciation. The pace must be comfortable and natural, not racing or languid. The voice embodies the message, so consider the relative merits of a man's voice or a woman's, a young voice or one more mature, the smooth professional sound or the homey conversational tone. As always, consider the target audience. Pay similar attention to other sounds that will be used because in radio sound provides the picture. Sound effects and background music are now available on compact disc or the Internet. Make sure it's legal to use the sounds or music you're considering. When in doubt, leave it out.

Advertising formats: The TV PSA

According to Nielsen Media Research's *2000 Report on Television*, Americans watch an average of more than 4 hours of TV a day, or 2 months of TV a year. Television is picture-oriented and action-driven. TV news, according to an industry publication, is always about people. In addition, TV stations search for stories that have emotion, controversy, conflict, and great video and are engaging and compelling. According to a 1997 survey of public affairs directors by the National CASA Association, 47 percent of television PSAs were affiliated with nonprofit organizations. In addition, public affairs directors were more likely to consider children's issues than any other cause.

TV PSAs are a very effective method for educating the public. The TV PSA format varies from a short announcement on the local news to a professional video resembling a commercial, depending on the organization's priorities and budget. TV stations put PSAs at the bottom of the advertising ladder (paid commercials get first choice, followed by station promotions), but they do air PSAs as a public service with free airtime. Look for PSAs currently on the air, and develop your PSA in a similar manner. TV PSAs last 30 seconds or less, similar to the length of a commercial. Short PSAs of 30 seconds are more likely to be aired.

TV production can be expensive and requires experienced technicians and costly camera equipment. For example, the organizers of RiverSmart, a new national campaign to encourage people to make simple changes in their everyday activities to help protect rivers, created three creative, professional TV PSAs at a total cost of $30,000. With today's digital technology and software capabilities, however, video production doesn't have to be cost-prohibitive. If you know someone who's good at shooting video, ask that person to volunteer to help. In addition, journalism students at local colleges and universities might be willing to help out. Talk to some professors about setting up a class project focused on your effort. Also consider the use of local public access cable, a format growing in popularity because organizations can broadcast messages without station oversight. public access cable studios and their technicians might provide an additional resource option for developing your PSA.

If you're using TV PSAs, keep in mind that TV stations receive many PSAs from a wide variety of organizations every day. To increase the chances of having yours aired, keep your copy simple and to the point, highlighting the essentials. You should approach stations about 6 weeks before the PSA would run. Most stations accept videos on 1-inch, ¾-inch, and Beta tape, though Beta is preferred. DVC-Pro, DV-Cam, and mini DV are digital tape formats that are growing in popularity.

A face is worth a thousand words, and a famous face...

When possible, use local or national celebrities in your PSA. Many organizations have used celebrities or elected officials to relay their messages. In 1999 the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources released broadcast PSAs for the "Save Louisiana Wetlands" campaign starring performers Harry Connick, Jr., and Aaron Neville, Chef Paul Prudhomme, and Kermit the Frog (**www.savelawetlands.org/site/psa.html**).

To gain public interest in stream protection and storm drain stenciling, the City of Honolulu developed PSAs featuring celebrities like Richard Chamberlain, the late John Denver, Jackie Chan, David Copperfield, Hawaiian star Jason Scott Lee, and local comedian Frank De Lima. All of the celebrities generously donated their time. Honolulu's prime time slots were made possible through an agreement with TV stations to air one free prime time message for every paid prime time message (**www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com**).

PSA Fast Facts		
In 2002 West Glen Communications, Inc., a broadcast services company, conducted a survey of public service directors at 157 TV stations and 127 radio stations in its 2002 Television and Radio Survey. The survey provides a snapshot of what TV and radio stations are looking for in PSAs. The complete survey results are available at **www.westglen.com/pr_news.**		
	TV	**Radio**
Percentage aired	**31 percent**	**35 percent**
Time of day aired	45 percent overnight 55 percent other	all day and night
Average length of rotation time	3 to 6 months	1 to 3 months
Preferred length	(1) 30 seconds (2) 60 seconds (3) 15 seconds	
Preferred formats	Beta SP or Beta	CD or live copy
Air community calendar information	78 percent	95 percent
Types of nonprofits qualifying for free air time (Stations were asked to check all that applied; therefore, responses will not tally to 100 percent.)	100 percent charitable 73 percent civic 64 percent social/recreation 44 percent labor 40 percent trade	100 percent charitable 89 percent civic 78 percent social/recreation 56 percent labor 54 percent trade
Top 4 Reasons PSAs Are Not Aired		
1. Content not relevant **2. Content too commercial**	**3. Dated materials received late** **4. Poor production quality**	

Environmental PSAs might feature various landscapes or citizens in action as a background with a narrator emphasizing the highlights. Organizers of Maine's Nonpoint Source Awareness Campaign, a collaborative effort between the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the State Planning Office, developed a 30-minute TV show and seven PSAs. The PSAs showed various scenes, including a dripping pipe, a fly-over view of a meandering stream, water flowing over rocks, and their logo and contact information. Maine PBS journalist Patsy Wiggins provided the narration. Visit the campaign's Web site for more information: www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/docwatershed/npscamp.htm.

Videos

Videos can be produced to visually showcase your project or issue. To generate interest in a cause, it's often better to show people what the problems and solutions are than to expect people to read about them. People are, by nature, picture-driven. That said, producing a video is very resource intensive, in terms of both time and money. Getting it right takes a lot of experience. Think back on some of the home videos you've watched.

The cost of producing a video can vary widely depending on a variety of factors such as script writing, use of hired talent, production facili-

Maine DEP's Watershed TV PSA

Script: Patsy, voice-over, :30

Polluted runoff... A lot of it starts with you and me... From the things we do every day.

We all live in a watershed. A watershed is the land area... like a bowl... across which water flows downstream to our lakes, streams, or oceans.

Because we all live downstream, everything we do, from fertilizing our lawns to spilling motor oil, contributes to water pollution.

Call today for tips on protecting our lakes, streams, and coastal waters... because clean water starts with you.

ties, and location. If you are interested in producing a video, check first with your local public cable access station. You might be able to get the production time and equipment use for free. The cable access station that helps produce your video will typically require you to air it on that station, but that's just free distribution for you.

The Annis Water Resources Institute of Grand Valley State University in west Michigan produced a video on its Bear Creek water quality project to share lessons learned with other interested watershed organizations. The cost of producing the 28-minute video was roughly $3,500. The Institute paid for a script writer, two actors, and the materials. They received many hours of free labor, and this cost did not include staff time. The Institute also had experienced videographers on staff. Without donated labor or resources, expect to pay $1,000 to $3,000 per minute of finished video. Thus, a 10-minute video could cost from $10,000 to $30,000. *Check out the Getting In Step video.*

Keep in mind that cable access stations are different from public television stations. Public television stations have specific requirements for the length of the video and quality of the tape. It must be broadcast quality. The costs are also higher because public television stations rent out their facilities and equipment.

Calendars

Calendars are a terrific outreach tool. They can be colorful, the messages on each page stay in front of the audience for a month at a time, and everyone uses them. Some groups custom-tailor their calendars and turn them into activity logs. People can keep track of the year's observable water events: ice-out and freeze-up, waterfowl migrations and nestings, mammal sightings, insect hatchings, and the like. You must plan carefully for distribution to hit the market around November when people are shopping for next year's calendar.

Other printed format options

- Newspaper insert
- Water bill insert
- Discount card or coupon
- Children's coloring book
- Restaurant placemats
- Curriculum
- Maps

Print materials

By far the most popular format for outreach campaigns is print. Printed materials include items like fact sheets, brochures, flyers, booklets, posters, bus placards, billboards, and doorknob hangers. The list goes on. These materials can be created easily and the target audience can refer to them again and again. When preparing printed material, be aware of how the target audience will use the information. If it is to be faxed or photocopied, you'll want to use a standard paper size and limit any artwork to line drawings. Dark-colored backgrounds can seriously limit photocopying, as you've probably discovered. Keep in mind that your message will compete with a lot of other printed material. Costs for high-quality color materials can be considerable, and the information can become dated quickly. Don't forget these issues during the planning phase. Check back to pages 40 and 41 to review the pros and cons of various formats.

Design and production

When designing the layout of your brochure, flyer, or how-to guide, use restraint, consistency, and quality materials. Restraint should be used in choosing typefaces or fonts; the kinds of graphics or artwork selected should be consistent; and quality materials should be used for photographs and artwork. Invite readers into your material with appealing, user-friendly layouts.

White space

White space is the space on the page that is left blank. White space should be treated as a graphic element and used liberally because it is very effective at drawing attention. Remember Nike's "Just Do It" ad campaign? Lots of white space, with the Nike logo and that short, simple phrase. People all over the world instantly know the brand name and its products.

To create white space immediately, try expanding the margins on your brochure or flyer. Make your headline wrap onto several lines so white space is created on the right side of the page. Don't full-justify your text. Ragged-right creates more white space at the end of each line. It also makes text easier to read because your brain remembers the last word in the ragged line above the one you're reading.

Typefaces

Design your materials so the layout draws the eye into and around the entire work. Select typefaces for readability. Provide variety, but don't go overboard. A good typeface calls attention to the message, not to itself. Choose no more than two or three different typefaces for your piece. DO NOT USE ALL CAPS BECAUSE IT'S TOO HARD TO READ THE TEXT AND IT PUTS OFF READERS WHO FEEL LIKE THEY'RE BEING SHOUTED AT. Sans serif fonts (fonts that don't have "feet" on the letters) are a good choice for headlines and subheads. Arial and

Helvetica are popular sans serif fonts. Serif fonts like Times Roman should be used for large blocks of text because your eye can read the words more easily. (This guide uses Frutiger typeface for the headers and ITC Slimbach for the text, which are similar to Arial and Times Roman, respectively.) Hundreds of fonts are available, but resist the urge to use them all in one publication. Experiment with fonts to get the look you want.

Layout of text

Always remember that the ultimate purpose of your materials is to communicate, so make your text readable. Don't organize text into a clever shape (like a circle or a Christmas tree) if it will be difficult to read. Be careful about using graphic images behind the text (watermarks) because they can make the text nearly unreadable if not done skillfully. A general rule of thumb is that the narrower the column of text, the smaller the font size. For example, on 8½- by 11-inch paper, if the text is 6 inches wide, the font size should be 12 point. If you choose a 2-column format, the font size may be decreased to 10 point, depending on the font. Most desktop publishing software packages include templates for various publication layouts.

Making your text come alive

Make the text interesting to your readers. Keep the length to a minimum and use the active voice. You can use various formats to make your text more engaging. Consider telling a story or leading off with a letter from a concerned citizen. Always try to include a local angle, and keep your message simple.

Hooks

Hooks are devices that can be used to reinforce information in the text or to grab the reader initially. Your headline can be a significant hook to engage the reader. Headers in the form of a question are always engaging. For example, a booklet on groundwater contamination could lead off with "Is someone contaminating your drinking water?" Consider including a light-hearted quiz at the end of your text to test the reader's knowledge. Using games, humor, or contests can also encourage the reader to read all of the material.

Logos

A logo is a visually distinctive treatment of your campaign or organization. It is the distilled, visual essence of who your organization is or what your campaign is trying to do. Think of your logo as your group or campaign's graphic signature. Plan for it to appear on all of your materials, including letterhead, business cards, brochures, newsletters, and meeting announcements. However, don't try to convey the objectives of your whole program in one logo. Instead, create a tag line or slogan to accompany your logo to make your message clearer.

Keeping costs down

The cost of printing outreach materials varies depending on several factors, such as number of colors used, size and type of paper, and number to be printed. To keep costs down, try the following:

- Always get three quotes for a printing job. You'll be surprised at the price differences. Be sure you're comparing "apples to apples."
- Allow plenty of time for production so you won't have to pay a rush charge.
- Check for "free color" days. Some printers print certain colors on certain days with no extra setup charges. Be sure to ask first.
- Ask for cheaper paper options. Sometimes printers have an overstock of certain kinds of paper because of job cancellations, prior sale purchases, and so forth.
- Think big. When deciding how many materials you want to print, remember your long-term needs. Printing charges per item diminish considerably after the first 1,000.

Tips for using clip art and photographs

- Keep all clip art files in a central folder so you can locate them easily
- Leave white space around the artwork; avoid crowding text
- Be sure to obtain permission from clip art Web site owners if required
- Select graphics that print well in both black-and-white and color
- Consider using a digital camera for ease of enhancing the image later and for use in electronic layouts, preferred by most printers. (Remember to use the highest-resolution setting on the camera to ensure print-quality photos.)
- Keep the sun at your back to bring out the most color and detail
- Look for backgrounds that suggest movement
- Dawn and dusk create soft, rosy, interesting light effects
- Midday lighting produces flat, shadowless images
- Take lots of pictures and screen them later
- People are interested in people, so use human subjects frequently
- Shoot people up close to avoid tiny, unrecognizable faces
- Kids and animals are almost always good subjects for photos

The key to a good logo is simplicity—clean, uncluttered lines and shapes. Ideally, people will recognize your materials from the logo alone. Silhouettes of objects often work well as logos. You might be able to start with a stock image or artwork, which will reduce your logo design costs. Creating custom artwork from scratch will increase the cost of your logo design substantially. Keep in mind that a logo must look good no matter how large or small it appears. You might be using it on large posters as well as business cards. Choose an image that's aesthetically pleasing—something you'll be proud to be identified with and glad to see again and again.

Using artwork and photos

Graphics—photos, logos, artwork, or even well-designed subheads—are great for breaking up long, gray blocks of text, giving readers a visual break. Images of lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and other watershed features are naturals for dressing up your message format. The emotional appeal they elicit can be tremendous. This section presents ideas for incorporating artwork and photos into your watershed message material and presentations.

Incorporating clip art. Clip art refers to drawings or other graphics used in outreach materials. Before clip art made the leap to computers, it was clipped from a booklet for use. Now you can use electronic images to suit your needs. You've most likely seen many examples in newspaper ads, in brochures, and even on Web sites. Clip art is produced specifically for the purpose of repeated use. It's easily accessible and most is not copyrighted.

The quickest place to find clip art is on your computer. Most word processing and Web development programs already supply many free graphics for your use. If those aren't appropriate, go online. There are hundreds of free clip art sites.

When you find an online image that meets your needs, simply right-click on the image and click on "save as." Once you've saved the graphic, insert the art into your document by clicking on "insert," "graphics," "from file." At all sites, be sure to read the webmaster's rights of use. Some sites require citations or references to their sites in return for using their graphic. If you're uncertain about the terms for use of a particular graphic or you can't agree with the terms, you should not use the graphic.

Using photos effectively. Using photographs can reinforce your message dramatically, but it's better not to use a photograph at all if it's of poor quality. Taking effective photographs takes practice and patience. Photos of people, especially children, appeal to many audiences. Show action, such as water quality sampling, tree planting, or festival events, in your photographs. If you borrow photographs, the photographer might require a photo credit.

If you don't have access to a good photographer, consider using stock photos. These photos are available on CD-ROMs and can start as low as $25 for a set of 50 good-quality photographs. The Internet also stocks thousands of images that can be downloaded. Make sure the resolution of your photos is appropriate for the format used. Print-quality digital files need high-resolution images to avoid a "pixelated" look. Lower resolution might be okay for Web-based formats. If you use a digital camera, you have a perfect opportunity to take photos of exactly what you need. Use the highest resolution possible, and save the photos as ".tif" (rather than ".jpg") images. This setting ensures the best reproduction and editing capabilities. The higher resolution will help you easily fine tune and edit the photo's shape and color and allow you to display the image in various sizes.

Clip art on the Web

Here are a few popular clip art Web sites on the Internet:

- **www.barrysclipart.com**
- **www.graphics.com**
- **www.clip-art.com**
- **www.clipartconnection.com**
- **www.free-clip-art.com**

Brochures

Brochures are an effective way to present and explain your watershed message. Unlike many other communication vehicles, brochures can be distributed in many places. Racks can be set up at libraries, marinas, and fairs. You can pass out brochures at meetings. You can even organize a direct mail campaign. Think through the purpose of your brochure and its intended audience before you begin. You might use the brochure as a way to solicit interest and involvement, or to promote watershed education and positive behaviors. Its purpose will significantly influence its appearance and content.

Tips for better brochures

- **Use colored or textured paper, graphics, and an audience-targeted layout**
- **Explore various sizes and folds, taking care to fit the layout to the fold**
- **Collect and review samples to get an idea of what you like and don't like**
- **Produce enough extras on the first run to handle additional demand**
- **Using colored ink can result in interesting combinations**
- **Leave plenty of white space; don't crowd the content**
- **Include variety in design, but watch out for an overly "busy" appearance**
- **Use subheadings to break up massive blocks of text**
- **Use bullets for quick and easy reading**
- **Ask several people to edit, critique, and proofread**
- **Avoid acronyms and technical jargon; call nonpoint source pollution "polluted runoff"**
- **Don't forget to include an address and contact number for more information**

Tips for better posters

- Focus on the objective, target audience, and message
- Sponsor a photo or design contest to obtain original artwork
- Use a catchy slogan or theme
- Choose graphic elements that immediately convey the message
- Make sure the desired size is economical and tube-friendly
- Use large, bold graphics (photos, artwork, etc.) to command attention
- Use a standard size so it's easy to obtain a frame for the poster
- Think about how the viewer's eye will flow across the poster and take in the message
- Consider balance, contrast, and other aspects of good design

Flyers

Flyers can be extremely effective if they're engaging, concise, and memorable. They're often used to impart brief, important messages or implore people to take simple actions. Explore your options regarding paper and ink colors, typefaces, and type sizes. Keep the text brief, the letters fairly large, and the design attractive. If your production involves manual cut-and-paste, incorporate artwork or pictures by photocopying or by attaching them with spray glue or double-sided tape. Don't forget to consider the target audience in the design, composition, and distribution.

Posters

Posters, displayed for months or even years, can be an excellent option for message delivery. Text, photos, slogans—even graphs—can be presented effectively on posters. Mostly, however, posters are used to build awareness ("Save the Bay") or deliver a simple message ("If you're not recycling, you're throwing it all away."). Most posters are produced in full color; however, even less expensive black-and-white or one- or two-color posters can be compelling if designed well. Be aware: Production and distribution costs can be considerable. Mailing tubes and postage can cost even more than the poster itself. Folding and mailing in large envelopes causes creases that detract from appearance, but this does not necessarily mean abandoning the approach. Posters can pay for themselves through sales, but the poster design must be exceptional.

NPS outreach materials available

As part of the Year of Clean Water activities, EPA celebrated Nonpoint Source Pollution Awareness Month in March 2003. Several outreach materials were developed, including a poster (shown here), a bookmark, a pop-up sponge, two fact sheets, and a brochure. Adobe Acrobat files of these documents are available for download at **www.epa.gov/nps/outreach.html**.

Displays

When composing any large-format display, treat the entire display space as if it were a page layout, a photograph, or a painting. The same basic elements of composition that govern good design and flow apply. You might consider producing an informative companion piece, such as an illustrated fact sheet or simple brochure, to accompany the display.

Watershed project displays at conferences, seminars, or outdoor events provide an excellent venue for sharing information, educating and involving citizens, promoting helpful actions, creating linkages, and building general awareness. You need to compose a display so it's as aesthetically appealing as a well-designed page. Use an engaging, flowing design that attracts attention, invites the viewer in, and leads the eye throughout. For example, if your display highlights your volunteer monitoring program, use a dipnet as the backdrop and include various sampling instruments in the display. Experiment with different fabrics to drape over the backdrop of your display to add texture. Whenever possible, "show" your program instead of "telling" it.

Avoid the common pitfall of pasting up dozens of 8- by 10-inch photographs with tiny captions. Try blowing up a significant photograph to poster size and then use additional photographs to support the primary theme. Produce and distribute brochures or flyers to convey the details of your project. Again, focus on the objective—why you're at the event, what message you hope to deliver to which audience, and what you want to accomplish.

Billboards

Billboards, like posters, can effectively present an outreach message or raise awareness if they are well designed and attractive. Remember to link the billboard location to the target audience. For example, if your message is targeting boaters in coastal areas, your billboard location should be within a few miles of the coast. Outdoor advertising venues can expose tens of thousands of people to your message, but be sensitive to the fact that some people find billboards objectionable, especially on scenic rural roads. Billboards offer a chance to present highly compelling, noncommercial messages that can be engaging, artistic, and memorable. Other positive aspects of using a billboard include high reach (number of people), immediacy, and high frequency (number of times seen). A downside is that you can convey only a short message to a relatively nonspecified audience. In addition, it's difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the message. Costs can also be considerable and are based on how many you buy, how long they are up, and where they are located. If you're considering using billboards, keep in mind that they are more effective at generating awareness or reminding people to do something than they are at educating, because people view them only briefly.

Tips for better displays

- Make sure you can read the text from a comfortable distance
- Interactive displays are ideal; doing is always better than just seeing or reading
- Interest kids with something fun, and their parents will follow
- Refrain from using your exhibit as a literature dump or that's where it will end up
- Be creative with design and layout, and do things on a big scale
- Use fabric and materials to make the display 3-dimensional

Billboards in action

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ; formerly, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission) launched a nonpoint source outreach campaign in 2001 that targeted watersheds with water quality problems where the causes were known. In watersheds where pet waste was identified as contributing to these problems, TCEQ developed a full-color billboard display of a dog with the message, "Please pick up my poop." The billboards served as a prompt to encourage behavior change. For more information, visit **www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/sbea/nps/nps.html**.

Tips for better billboards

- **The message should change every 60 days or it will blend into the background**
- **Investigate display opportunities before designing or producing the ad**
- **Obtain at least three production/printing/display estimates**
- **Approach local businesses to request free display for public service ads**
- **Design a strong, simple ad that can be understood quickly at a distance**
- **Minimize the text and let the visuals make your point as much as possible**

Presentations

If you've spent any time at conferences and meetings, chances are you've seen a few slides or overheads. Firing up a 60-slide PowerPoint show or dropping slides into a projector and setting up a screen does not, however, guarantee a successful show. It takes planning and practice to present your story as a beautifully wrapped package that creates a coherent and aesthetically pleasing visual journey. Go through the presentation several times out loud. Get comfortable with it, but don't memorize it. Avoid saying "ah" or "um." Practice using pauses instead.

Gear your presentation—its content and its style—to the audience. Once you have a stock of photos and slides to choose from, it's simple to go back in and add, switch, or delete slides as appropriate. Avoid reading text slides during a presentation. Use the time to talk about the subject matter in the text. Focus your slide configuration and vocal presentation on telling a story based on your knowledge, experience, insight, and perspective. It's a good idea to create an outline to make sure that your presentation has a central focus and a beginning, middle, and end. Self-directed humor is often effective if used sparingly. Make handouts of the slides if you can so the audience has something to refer to and to make notes.

Use only visually pleasing, in-focus photos and graphics. Avoid slides that require introductory apologies (e.g., "I know this is hard to see, but . . ."). Flow charts are notoriously indecipherable from a distance. Break down the chart items to several slides, or summarize the process being depicted in a larger format. Monitoring data charts can look busy or crowded unless carefully thought out in advance. Often, slides of water quality data are more meaningful and powerful if the

PowerPoint pointers

Like it or not, PowerPoint is the preferred medium for slide presentations. Avoid these pitfalls:

- ***Color choices.*** **In general, if you are showing your slides in a very dark room, a dark background like black or royal blue with light text is best. If the room has some ambient light, a light background with black text is best.**
- ***Color scheme.*** **PowerPoint has a variety of templates and color schemes that help to make a unified presentation. Do not introduce more than three colors, and keep the background color the same throughout.**
- ***Sound effects.*** **Attaching sound effects to your text as it flies onto the screen can be amusing for the first few slides, but it will grow annoying. Use sound effects sparingly to emphasize key points.**
- ***Monotony busters.*** **Break up the text slides with full-color photographs or cartoons to avoid the appearance of the same slide being repeated.**
- ***Animation.*** **Introduce some movement to your slides through arrows appearing to highlight a key bullet, or graphics "dissolving" on the screen.**
- ***Text movement.*** **If your text flies onto the screen from the left, keep it consistent to avoid making the audience queasy.**
- ***Keep it moving.*** **Introduce your text in groups, or the whole slide at once, instead of line by line.**
- ***Bells and whistles.*** **Keep the special effects to a minimum so your listeners will be more interested in the content of your presentation.**

data are summarized or distilled to an essential point. Keep in mind that the audience has only about 30 seconds per slide to digest the information. Always make sure text slides are readable, even from the back of the room. Don't be afraid to explore different choices of background themes and color schemes, but once you determine your choice, maintain it consistently throughout the presentation. Using default color schemes in presentation software will ensure appropriate contrast between background colors and text colors. Finally, consider using a rapid-fire photo montage at some point in the program: Present a succession of photos with little or no commentary, reinforcing your message with visual images that create a memorable impression.

When using overhead transparencies, remember to print your text in at least a 14-point font so it will be readable on the screen. In general, dark text against a light or clear background works best with transparencies. If using overheads, try to intersperse some nontext materials (such as a newspaper clipping or cartoon) to break up the presentation.

Events

A watershed event can be the most energizing format for distributing messages targeted at awareness, education, or direct action. A community event plays into audience members' desires for belonging to a group and having shared goals and visions for the community. They can also help to create new social norms that become incentives

for others to take part in the behaviors you're promoting. In urban areas, where knowing your neighbors and other members of your community is the exception instead of the rule, community events can help to strengthen the fabric of the community by creating and enhancing community relationships, building trust, and improving the relationships between government agencies and the public. And frankly, if done well, they're just plain fun.

If resources are limited and the message is fairly focused, try to piggyback onto an existing event that involves the target audience. Trade shows and other events for farmers, developers, boaters, fishers, the automobile industry, and other groups can often be accessed with a little research and a few phone calls. If you're hosting your own event, nothing can substitute for planning. No detail is too small, and no aspect is too insignificant to be thoroughly examined, reexamined, and subjected to contingency planning. Major events are much like military campaigns. You'll need plenty of advance time, information on the site, logistical plans, contingency plans (e.g., rain dates), a workforce commensurate with the objective, and the capacity to accommodate plenty of action.

A major consideration in planning an event is how you intend to attract attention. As in all outreach, you can't deliver a message to the target audience if you don't have access to them. Approaches for generating interest and attention are limited only by your creativity. Watershed groups have used blues bands, balloons, face-painting, mascots, dunking contests, interactive displays, video games, giveaways, clowns, jugglers, and celebrities to draw in crowds. Nearly any idea that works and does not detract from the message is acceptable. Increase the exposure of your event by inviting local TV and radio stations to cover it.

Community fairs and festivals

Festivals and fairs provide great opportunities for hands-on learning and can be fun for all ages. These types of events get people involved in different activities that show them that converting their behaviors to sustainable ones is easier than they thought. When people are actively and publicly involved at an event, they're more likely to commit to engaging in an activity at home. In addition, getting people to commit to a small, upbeat activity at a community fair increases the likelihood that they'll agree to commit to a subsequent, more demanding activity, such as organizing a stream cleanup.

Some things to consider when organizing a fair or festival:

- ***Time and date.*** Choose an appropriate time of year based on your geographic location and climate, particularly if your event will be held outside. Schedule a rain date, if appropriate.
- ***Size of the event.*** Decide on the number of attendees (as a range or target) you hope to have at your event.

Festival resources

The Groundwater Foundation's watershed festival series provides lots of tips for putting on a community or school festival:

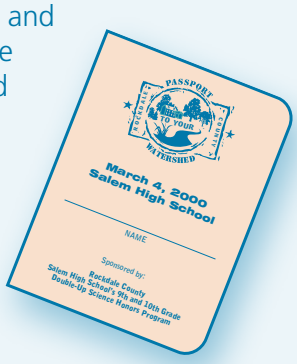
- *Making Waves: How to Put on a Water Festival*
- *Making Ripples: How to Organize a School Water Festival*
- *Making More Waves: Ideas for Organizing Your Festival*
- *Making A Bigger Splash: Best Ever Water Festival Ideas*

Order them online at **www.groundwater.org**.

- ***Facility/location.*** If you need to reserve a banquet hall, community club site, or fairgrounds, be sure to check availability far in advance. Make sure the venue fits the message and the audience.
- ***Types of activities.*** Think about the types of activities you'd like to have at your fair or festival. Will there be games geared toward children? Will there be more complex concepts geared toward adults? Do you want attendees to visit each activity in a specific order or at their leisure? Choose activities that will help meet the objectives of your water quality improvement project. Make your activities interesting and enjoyable.
- ***Staffing the event.*** Choose appropriate personnel to staff each activity at the event. Use experts from outside your organization when appropriate to lend weight and knowledge to an issue.
- ***Be creative.*** Use creative titles for your activities, such as "What's Buggin' You?" for a stream macroinvertebrate identification booth. Ask a local band to play, organize a fly fishing demonstration, or arrange to have costumed characters or local celebrities talk to kids and have their pictures taken with them. At the Southern Maine Children's Water Festival, local TV and radio personalities serve as emcees in a water trivia contest. The arrangement gets kids interested in participating and enhances media coverage at the same time.
- ***Use cosponsors.*** Identify cosponsors early to help support various aspects of the event, such as paying for promotional items, sponsoring a booth, or providing food or music. Solicit cosponsors by offering to include their names and logos on all the event

Passport to your watershed

Water quality managers in Rockdale County, Georgia, organized a watershed fair to educate citizens about the development of a new watershed management plan. The county teamed up with several local businesses to produce giveaways and staff the fair. A local developer paid for the production of watershed stickers, while a local paper company provided and staffed a recycling exhibit at the fair. The county also worked closely with the local news media to cover the fair and other events related to the watershed management plan in a series of newspaper articles.



At the fair, county residents and students were given watershed passport booklets in which they received stamps for completing various activities, such as solving a watershed knowledge crossword puzzle, identifying stream macroinvertebrates, and marking which subwatersheds they live in by placing push pins on large subwatershed maps.

In 2000 the county received an award from the Georgia Water & Pollution Control Association for the Best Public Education Program for a large utility. The award cited the county's foresight in creating a public outreach strategy to guide the program and the success of the watershed fair.

materials. Select your cosponsors wisely. Make sure they are well liked and trusted by the members of the target audience. You wouldn't want to ask a local paper product company that's been involved in litigation for environmental rule-breaking to support your tree-planting festival!

- ***Encourage future participation.*** Provide reminders or incentives for participants to continue their good stewardship at home or at work. Bookmarks and refrigerator magnets serve as prompts to remind people of actions to improve or protect water quality while at home. Pledge cards can be used to gain small commitments that participants will change their behavior permanently. For example, in Whatcom County, the Washington Department of Ecology developed a pledge program that encourages residents and businesses to reduce watershed pollution through activities such as redirecting downspouts away from impervious surfaces and leaving grass clippings on the lawn. By signing up, residential participants receive a personalized "To Do List" to hang on their refrigerators and a recycled glass suncatcher. Businesses receive recognition in local publications and a pledge plaque to display in their stores or offices.

Field trips

Providing tours and field trips for members of the target audience—especially elected officials, watershed committee members, and the media—is a great way to communicate your message. What would have taken more time to explain on paper or in words often can be conveyed more easily and more powerfully through field trips to farm demonstration sites, stream restoration sites, or backyard wetlands. Field trips allow people to see for themselves how your water quality improvement efforts are making a difference or what still needs to be done. River Network sponsors a River Rally workshop each year for its partners to meet colleagues, talk to funders, and keep staff and volunteers of river organizations up-to-date on the latest watershed issues. The workshop includes whitewater rafting, canoeing, fishing, and wildlife viewing field trips. The Saugus River Watershed Council in Massachusetts also sponsors a series of canoe trips to gain support for improving the natural resources of the watershed.

Open houses

An open house allows the public to tour a facility or displays at their own pace. No formal presentations are made. This method works well if you're trying to educate the public on multiple issues at once or collect public comments and feedback. Open houses foster one-on-one communication and build the credibility of the organization or issue. Keep in mind that open houses can be more staff- and resource-intensive than other public meetings, depending on the number and kind of displays used and the type of information being presented.

Public hearings and meetings

Public hearings—formal meetings with scheduled presentations—provide an opportunity for the public to make formal comments on an issue or document. Public hearings are often required when government agencies develop new rules or regulations or make some other proposal that might affect the public. However, public hearings do not allow for dialogue among the commenters and the presenters, which often creates an "us versus them" setting. In addition, because many people are not comfortable speaking in front of a group, comments received might be biased toward more outgoing groups or individuals. Public meetings are less formal than public hearings and often include presentations coupled with question-and-answer sessions. Although public meetings on charged issues might spark more debate than education, most allow open, friendly dialogue among participants and presenters.

The stakeholder roundtable is another effective way to provide education and discuss issues with concerned citizens. It is also an excellent forum for networking and sharing practices, and the atmosphere of the roundtable can be one of openness and continuous learning. In 2001 EPA provided Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Listening Sessions for the public to help improve understanding of the TMDL program from all perspectives and to identify and discuss ideas for addressing issues in the TMDL program. People were provided an opportunity to talk in small groups with the help of facilitators.

Targeted events

Events focused on a specific activity can help generate support for your cause by providing the target audience with hands-on experience that will help them understand the specific water quality problem or issue. Volunteer stream cleanups, household hazardous waste pickup days, photo contests, nature walks, workshops, wildlife watches, or other hands-on activities can be used to generate awareness of your issue, communicate your message, recruit people to support and distribute your message, and motivate participation in sustainable behaviors.

The Bear Creek Watershed Project focused on area schools by hiring a professional playwright to form a theater troupe called the Bear Creek Players. The group of actors performed at schools and at area festivals (including the Water Fest), presenting short skits centered on water quality issues. The stories gave members of the target audience a better awareness of different issues in the watershed. *Check out the Getting In Step video.*

These types of events are best carried out with the support of one or more cosponsors. Teaming up with local conservation districts, businesses, or environmental organizations can bring more people to the event, help defray the cost of the materials or staff needed for the event, and lend credibility to your cause.

Water Fest keeps growing

The Bear Creek Watershed Project hosts an annual water festival called Water Fest. It started in 1993 with about 50 participants; in 2002 more than 300 people attended. A new activity is added each year. Kids love collecting bugs in Bear Creek and then sorting them. One year the project organizers added a Mexican folk dancing group, which brought out members of the Hispanic community that hadn't participated previously. Water Fest holds a pancake breakfast before the festival every year to attract a crowd.

Check out the Getting In Step video.

Tips for better bumper stickers

- Check popular sizes before finalizing your design (and you might want to make sure they fit in mailing envelopes)
- Present a brief message in large, bold letters and keep graphics simple and recognizable
- Attach a mock-up to a bumper to ensure readability

Tips for better T-shirts

- L, XL, and XXL are the most popular sizes
- Select 100% cotton or a blend of recycled cotton and other post-consumer recycled materials. For instance, Fortrel EcoSpun is made from recycled plastic bottles and is just as comfortable, durable, and attractive as cotton
- Don't forget the popularity of long-sleeved varieties in cool climates
- Explore options in shirt and ink colors for variety
- Get quotes from several suppliers and estimate quantities carefully to avoid overstocks
- Use your logo and watershed name
- Try to get a picture of a local celebrity wearing your shirt
- Caution: Dated materials are harder to sell after the event

Giveaways

Most everyone loves getting free stuff! Whether it's pens or coffee mugs, they are often snatched up quickly. See the list under "What to Give Away" for some ideas. Giveaways are good for promoting watershed organizations, simple actions, and general awareness. They show others that the participant is actively involved in the cause, helping to create social norms and encouraging others to get involved.

Giveaways are also visual prompts that remind people to choose behaviors that protect and improve water quality. A toothbrush imprinted with the message "Turn off the water while you brush!" will remind people to conserve water every time they pick up their toothbrushes. Try to make your giveaways more successful, make sure the message they convey is related to the type of giveaway handed out and that the item will be used repeatedly when the person needs to choose the most appropriate behavior.

Giveaways vary greatly in cost and desirability. Most expensive and more desirable giveaways can be reserved for rewarding a certain level of participation or commitment. Examples include T-shirts or baseball caps for event organizers or runners that raise money for an environmental cause and coffee mugs or beach towels for volunteers at storm drain marking events or stream cleanups.

When choosing a giveaway, keep in mind the alternative message it might send—for example, "too much plastic is being used"—which could counteract the environmental benefit of the message. And keep the target audience in mind. Don't give away golf balls with your logo to elementary school kids!

What to give away

- Bumper stickers
- Calendars
- Temporary tattoos for kids
- Bookmarks
- Refrigerator magnets
- Stickers for kids
- Pens and pencils
- Pop-up sponges
- Caps
- Mugs
- Beach towels
- Beverage holders
- Key chains
- Barbecue aprons
- Hot pads and oven mitts
- Tablecloths
- Bottle openers
- Buttons and lapel pins
- Totebags/canvas grocery bags
- Salt & pepper shakers
- Pennants or flags
- T-shirts
- Frisbees
- Baseball caps
- Rulers
- License plate frames
- Toothbrushes
- Rubber jar openers
- Note pads
- Compasses

Tips for better giveaways

- Check with a printer to see if your design can be reproduced effectively and inexpensively on a number of different materials
- If you're developing a two-color design, make sure it also reproduces well in black-and-white
- Allow plenty of time for design, production, printing, and distribution
- Carry the design theme or logo throughout all literature and accessory items
- Consider packaging method and costs for mailing or other distribution
- Check with an advertising specialties company for ordering in quantity
- Conduct a program to market or distribute the products

Bumper stickers

Bumper stickers are highly individualized traveling billboards, which means that some people love them and others are turned off by them. (Some people collect them but will not display them on their vehicles.) Because many Americans spend considerable time on the road, chances for message exposure through bumper stickers are excellent. Keep your messages positive and focused on the objective (e.g., Save the Bay!). Composition is easy: Combine a catchy message with a piece of art or a simple background, and you're in business. Production options include everything from print shops to silk-screening in a garage. Choose a design that can be seen from a distance and a color that will beckon from a bumper. Bear in mind that bumper stickers are usually much better at raising awareness than at promoting behavior change.

T-shirts and promotional items

T-shirts and caps are popular items and "really get around" to help spread your message. Use your imagination or work with a graphic artist on how best to conceive, design, and distribute them. Be sure to carefully consider cost, and don't be overly optimistic on sales income because sales rarely achieve expectations.

You can also order any number of other customized items emblazoned with your logo and message. Prices go down with quantity, but make sure you'll be able to distribute your supply within a reasonable amount of time.

Mascots

An effective way to communicate your message to the younger set is through mascots. Mascots become familiar faces that can take on personalities, stories, and "lives" of their own. Consider adapting child-friendly people or critters into puppets, comics, posters, banners, displays, festivals, parades, calendars, contests, skits, student lessons, or activities.

Ollie the Otter

Ollie the Otter was born June 12, 1996, at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Central Wyoming Regional Water District in Casper, Wyoming, and Colorado Springs Utilities both use Ollie to teach kids about the water cycle, water treatment and distribution, and water conservation and protection.

Ollie has made community appearances, thrown out the first pitch at a baseball game, and even ridden in parades. Ollie says, "Every Drop Counts." To find out if Ollie can visit your community, visit **www.csu.org/water/ollie/about.html.**

RiverSmart Web site

RiverSmart, a national public education campaign from River Network, shows people how simple changes in their everyday activities can help protect rivers. In addition to widespread TV, radio, and newspaper ads, the organization hosts an attractive and practical Web site. The site provides interactive games for kids and parents, a tip sheet for protecting water quality at home, and downloadable samples of numerous PSAs. Visitors can also send free electronic postcards to friends and family and sign up for the RiverSmart newsletter. For more information, visit **www.riversmart.org**.

The Internet

Increasingly, the Internet is becoming a powerful means of communication. According to a 2001 Nielsen/Netratings survey, 58 percent of Americans have Internet access in their homes. It provides worldwide access to hundreds of thousands of sites containing millions of documents, chat rooms for special interest groups, and database/mapping features that are almost mind-boggling. Web sites can reach large audiences with relatively minimal effort.

Although the Internet is used regularly and extensively by agency personnel, environmental group leaders, and the business community, average citizens still get the great bulk of their environmental messages from more traditional venues—especially the TV and radio news media. Remember, too, that a Web-based approach is very narrowly segmented, so the odds that you will be able to reach your intended audience solely through the Web are not good. Many groups find that approaches based on the news media, targeted presentations, printed materials, events, and giveaways are effective ways to draw the audience to a Web site.

Tips for designing a Web site

- **Keep it simple to keep download times short. Surfers will move on quickly if the site takes too long to view.**
- **Use colors and fonts that are easy to read.**
- **Provide contact information, including mailing address, phone number, and e-mail.**
- **Use a few attractive graphics to make your site more interesting.**
- **Make sure the site can be viewed properly with both Netscape and Internet Explorer.**
- **Be sure to use alternate text tags (image tags) for photos and graphics for better accessibility. Consider the accessibility of your Web site by testing it at bobbywatchfire.com. Bobby is an accessibility software tool designed to help expose and repair barriers to accessibility and encourage compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 508 requires that federal Web sites allow users with disabilities to have access to the same information as those without disabilities. Even if your organization is not a federal agency, ensuring that your site is accessible by all members of the target audience will broaden the reach of your campaign.**
- **Limit the use of plug-ins like RealTime or Shockwave that have to be downloaded. If a free plug-in like Adobe Acrobat (for viewing PDF files) is necessary, include a link to the page where that plug-in can be downloaded.**
- **Make your site interactive by including hotlinks, online quizzes, or other features that draw interest. Remember that surfers tend to scan a site for only 10 seconds before they move on.**
- **Update your site frequently! A stagnant Web site will lose the audience quickly. When developing your outreach plan, build in time (and resources) to maintain an up-to-date Web site with press releases, new monitoring data, and support.**

Registering a domain name

When you're ready to develop your organization's Web site, a few simple steps can help you get started. You may use free Web site hosts that allow you to use their domain to host your site (e.g., www.geocities.com, www.orgsites.com), but in the long run it's better to register your own domain. When choosing your site's name, try to pick a domain that's easy to identify with your group and easy to remember. If your organization has a long name, think about using an acronym or abbreviation that can be remembered easily. There are many domain registrars on the Web with varying services and fees, such as www.hostapalooza.com and www.registernames.com. Each site provides a chance for you to enter the Web site name you want and takes you through the registration steps. Search around to find the one most appropriate for your organization. Fees range from $8 to $70 for the first 2 years, with additional (slightly lower) annual fees until your Web site is removed.

Designing your Web site

Designing an attractive, interactive Web site is crucial if you want the target audience to visit your site often. If your organization already has a homepage you can link to and a Web programmer in-house, soliciting that person's services will be the most affordable option. If not, several software packages, such as Macromedia Dreamweaver and Microsoft FrontPage, allow you to design a Web site without having to learn any complicated programming languages. Other options include hiring a Web site design firm if funding is available, or recruiting college students majoring in information technology.

Unique Web sites

Following are several Web sites that might provide inspiration when designing your organization's site:

- Water Saver Home, **http://h2ouse.org**
- Washington Department of Ecology Polluted Runoff Page, **www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/nonpoint**
- San Diego BayKeeper, **www.sdbaykeeper.org**
- Lake Champlain Basin Program, **www.lcbp.org**
- Water on the Web, **wow.nrri.umn.edu/wow**
- Colorado Water Protection Project, **www.ourwater.org**
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources, **www.dnr.state.md.us**
- Florida Community College Consortium for Pollution Prevention, **www.fc3p2e.com**

Building Blocks:

Package the Message

With the message "Fertilize in the Fall. That's All!" in hand, the hypothetical Herndon County now needed to choose the package that would be most effective. Since most members of the audience are homeowners who do not have much time to spare, the county needed to identify the time of day that most of the audience would have the greatest attention span—during their commute and at night while watching TV.

By reviewing a recent subway transit survey conducted by the Greater Herndon/Carlisle Metropolitan Transit Authority, the county learned that more than 60 percent of county residents ride the subway twice a week or more. The county therefore developed five eye-catching subway transit posters centered around its fertilizer reduction campaign. The posters were displayed over the course of 6 months. The transit poster artwork was also used for full-size educational posters and water bill inserts.

On the Web...

To design Web sites that attract the audience and keep them coming back, understand that people don't read Web pages like they read the paper. The *Communicators Guide* (**govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/papers/bkgrd/communicators.html**) notes the following:

- Reading rates slow by 25 to 40 percent, so don't include lengthy blocks of text
- The monitor's flicker causes eyestrain
- Almost 80 percent of readers scan text; only 20 percent read every word
- Readers scan a site for about 10 seconds before they click on something else, so make your text count. Put the most important and interesting information near the top of the page

Marketing your Web site

Once your Web site is online, it's time to promote it to the public! Publicizing your Web address—the Universal Resource Locator, or URL—to the target audience is the most important step in developing a Web site. Many organizations overlook this step, essentially wasting their Web sites' potential. Send information on your site to newsletters, organizations, listservers, or other Web sites that the target audience frequents. Include the URL on all your outreach materials—letterhead, giveaways, brochures, and so forth.

You can add the URL to many online search engines such as Yahoo, Google, and Infoseek. You can register with each one individually for free or use a service like Microsoft bCentral Submit It at www.submit-it.com to submit your listing to about 20 search engines for a 1-year fee of $49. All you'll need to do is select about 20 keywords for the search engine to use. Even if you don't register, within a few weeks many search engines will catalog your site automatically.

Keep in mind that each search engine searches in a different way. For example, the Excite search engine looks at the words on the main pages of the Web site, whereas AltaVista looks at only page titles and meta tags (keywords listed in the Web site's HTML code to help search engines locate your site).

Partnering with other Web site hosts

There are opportunities to reach other audiences through the Internet by using interest group Web sites (e.g., off-highway vehicle users, anglers, farmers). However, you'll probably reach national audiences through such Web sites, not necessarily the citizens of your watershed. Explore these sites before deciding to use them in your program.

The Internet is becoming more important to local watershed outreach efforts by the month. Its primary value lies in providing access to general water science information, databases like EPA's Surf Your Watershed (www.epa.gov/surf) and those hosted by other public agencies, and environmental news from state and national groups like the Conservation Technology Information Center at www.ctic.purdue.edu.

Consider asking to have your Web site's URL added to other organizations' links pages. This approach increases the number of visitors at your Web site without costing an arm and a leg. Visit various related Web sites and send them e-mails with a request to add a link to your site on their site. Offer to add their link to your site as well. This is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to spread your message.

Using listservers

E-mail is the preferred communication medium among many citizens, business people, and agency officials because it can be accessed at convenient times and provides a written record of the communication. Active watershed projects often find it useful to establish e-mail lists through the help of a listserver to keep participants updated on meetings, policy discussions, and other matters. Implementing this communication link is simple and allows stakeholders to keep abreast of developments at their leisure.

Establishing an e-mail list is not difficult. It can even be in the form of a "round robin" exchange, where list members are the designated recipients of the first message and simply press "reply to all" to post messages to the entire group. Many state and federal government agencies already host lists in-house, and you might be able to add a new list to their server easily. Other independent organizations might choose to start lists through Web sites.

Majordomo is a free program that automates the management of Internet mailing lists. Commands are sent to Majordomo by e-mail to handle all aspects of list maintenance. Once a list is set up, virtually all operations can be performed remotely, requiring no intervention on the part of the list manager. Visit www.linuxwebmasterfree.com/majordomo.html for more information. Other sites that offer free lists and online message boards include groups.yahoo.com, groups.msn.com, and www.topica.com.

What does it cost?

Outreach campaigns can be costly and labor-intensive, especially those that use TV PSAs, special events, printed materials, videos, or targeted mailings. The table on page 76 provides estimated costs for some types of outreach materials. Contact individual vendors for actual prices. When you defined your goals and objectives in Step 1, you determined available funding and staff members for the project, as well as potential partners. This is a perfect opportunity for your partners to lend a hand (or funds). Ask them to volunteer to pay the production or shipping costs of materials. For more information on how to obtain funding or in-kind services, refer to Part 2: Implementing the Campaign.

EPA discussion lists

EPA's nonpoint source pollution and septic system listservers host lively discussions on issues of interest to watershed groups. Visit **www.epa.gov/epahome/listserv.htm** to learn how to subscribe to both.

Costs for various outreach materials

Category	Item	Cost (per 1000)*
Giveaways	Magnets	$300 for 2-color business card size
	Posters (11" x 17", 4 colors, glossy paper)	$1,000
	Canvas Tote Bags	
	1 color, 2 sides	$3,100
	2 colors, 2 sides	$3,850
	Stickers (one color, 3" diameter)	$300
	Lapel pins	$1,150
	Key holders	$1,500
Printed materials	Printed fact sheets (2-sided)	
	1 color	$600
	2 colors	$840
	4 colors	$960
	Trifold panel brochure (11" x 25.5")	
	1 color	$1,600
	2 colors	$2,100
	4 colors	$2,400
Category	**Item**	**Cost (per item)**
Display booths	Tabletop	$500–$800
	10' x 10'	$1,500–$2,500
Bus advertisements	Panels on bus interior (bus boards)	$100–$150 for 1–12 months on 20–60 buses (production costs vary from region to region)
	Vinyl panels on entire bus exterior	$1,250/month per bus (fees may be higher in large metropolitan areas; production costs vary from region to region)
Billboards	Billboard	$700–$1000/month
Web sites	Register domain name	$8–$70 for first 2 years
Newspaper ads	4" x 6" ad	$300–$5,000
Movie theaters	30-second PSA	$1,400/week in 16 theaters
Other	Stock photos on a CD-ROM	$30–$400

**Notes: These costs are only estimates. Contact individual vendors for actual prices.*
2003 prices

PROCESS CHECKLIST

Step 4: Package your message

- ❑ Am I getting the message to my target audience with this format?
- ❑ Is the format appropriate for the message?
- ❑ Is the format appropriate for the target audience?
- ❑ Does the format exclude any members of the target audience?
- ❑ Does the format favor any members of the target audience?
- ❑ Does the format grab the attention of the target audience?
- ❑ Do I have the resources necessary to prepare and use the selected format?
- ❑ Do I have access to the skilled staff needed to prepare and use the selected format?
- ❑ Will I have enough time to produce and distribute this format?
- ❑ Will I be able to distribute messages in this format effectively?
- ❑ Will I have enough materials for the entire target audience?